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*SOPHROSUNE* AND THE RHETORIC OF  
SELF-RESTRAINT

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SUPPLEMENTUM DUCENTESIMUM QUINQUAGESIMUM NONUM

ADRIAAN RADEMAKER

*SOPHROSÝNE* AND THE RHETORIC OF  
SELF-RESTRAINT



# *SOPHROSUNE* AND THE RHETORIC OF SELF-RESTRAINT

POLYSEMY & PERSUASIVE USE OF AN  
ANCIENT GREEK VALUE TERM

BY

ADRIAAN RADEMAKER



BRILL  
LEIDEN • BOSTON  
2005

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

A C.I.P. record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISSN 0169-8958  
ISBN 90 04 14251 7

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Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill Academic Publishers,  
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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

*To the memory of  
Professor Dr C.M.J. Sicking  
in gratitude for his teaching*



## CONTENTS

Preface .....	xi
Chapter One    Introduction .....	1
1. Aims of the Investigation: <i>σωφροσύνη</i> in Plato and in non-philosophical Greek .....	1
2. The Meanings of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> : An Overview provided by Plato's <i>Charmides</i> .....	3
3. Problems with Traditional Semantic Descriptions of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> .....	7
4. Contrasting Theories of Language and Meaning: Structuralist versus Cognitive Approaches .....	14
5. Contrasting Conceptions of Categorisation: The 'Classical Approach' versus Cognitive Linguistics..	19
6. Requirements for a Semantic Description of <i>σώφρων</i> and Cognates .....	26
7. Theoretical Apparatus for Addressing these Requirements .....	30
8. The Disposition of this Study: Theory Versus Practice..	35
Chapter Two    Homer .....	41
1. Introduction .....	41
2. <i>Σοφροσύνη</i> and the Rationalisation of Restraint in Homer .....	42
3. Restraint and Concern for Others: <i>Αἰδώς</i> .....	50
4. Loss or Destruction of <i>φρένες</i> : the Critique of Unaccountable Behaviour .....	54
5. Models of Good Sense and Control: Penelope, Telemachus and Odysseus .....	61
5.1. Penelope .....	62
5.2. Telemachus .....	68
5.3. Odysseus.....	70
6. Conclusion.....	74



Chapter Three	Archaic Poetry.....	75
1.	Introduction: <i>σωφροσύνη</i> and the Male Citizen.....	75
2.	Political Uses of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> : Theognidea, Pindar, Bacchylides.....	76
3.	<i>σωφροσύνη</i> in Private Life.....	92
4.	Conclusion.....	97
Chapter Four	Aeschylus.....	99
1.	Introduction.....	99
2.	Restraint of Violence and Respect for the Gods: <i>Seven Against Thebes, Oresteia</i> .....	102
3.	Quiet Behaviour and Control of Emotion: <i>Seven Against Thebes, Suppliant Women</i> .....	113
4.	Subjects and Authorities: Obedience.....	117
5.	Conclusion.....	120
Chapter Five	Sophocles.....	123
1.	Introduction.....	123
2.	<i>Ajax</i> .....	125
3.	<i>Electra</i> .....	133
4.	The 'Prudential' <i>σωφροσύνη</i> of the Non-Heroic Citizen.....	137
5.	Conclusion.....	141
Chapter Six	Euripides.....	143
1.	Introduction.....	143
2.	The Use of <i>σώφρων</i> and Cognates in Euripides: Men ...	145
3.	The Use of <i>σώφρων</i> and Cognates in Euripides: Women.....	153
4.	Different Views on <i>σωφροσύνη</i> : The Farmer in <i>Electra</i> ...	161
5.	<i>Hippolytus</i> .....	163
6.	<i>Bacchae</i> .....	173
7.	<i>Medea</i> .....	182
8.	Conclusion.....	188
Chapter Seven	Historiography.....	191
1.	Introduction.....	191
2.	Herodotus.....	194
3.	Thucydides.....	201
3.1.	<i>σωφροσύνη</i> in External and Internal Politics.....	203

3.2. <i>σωφροσύνη</i> in Sparta .....	208
3.3. <i>σωφροσύνη</i> as a Political Slogan in Athens.....	216
3.4. The Chapter on <i>στάσις</i> .....	218
3.5. Conclusion.....	221
Chapter Eight Aristophanes and the Orators .....	223
1. Introduction .....	223
2. Aristophanes: The <i>σωφροσύνη</i> of the Ordinary Citizen	225
3. The Attic Orators: the <i>σώφρων πολίτης</i> .....	233
4. The <i>σωφροσύνη</i> of the <i>πόλις</i> .....	247
5. Conclusion.....	249
Chapter Nine Preliminary Conclusions: The Meaning of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> in Plato's Time: A Synchronic Description .....	251
1. Introduction .....	251
2. The Uses of <i>σώφρων</i> and Cognates in Plato's Time: A Synchronic Conspectus.....	252
3. Turning Our Data into a 'Network': Parameters and Some Legenda .....	270
3.1. The Central Parameters: Who is <i>σώφρων</i> and What are the Manifestations of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> .....	270
3.2. Individual Perspectives: Which Speakers Insist on <i>σωφροσύνη</i> ? .....	271
3.3. Physical Manifestations of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> .....	272
3.4. The Connections between the Groups of Uses: The Synchronic Conspectus and Individual Authors: The Abstract Schemata ...	274
4. The Specialised/Restricted Use of Some Cognate Terms: A Note on <i>σωφρόνως</i> , <i>σωφρονίζειν</i> , <i>σωφρονιστής</i> and <i>σωφρόνισμα</i> .....	288
5. An Outlook: Towards Plato .....	291
Chapter Ten Plato .....	293
1. Introduction .....	293
2. Polysemous <i>σωφροσύνη</i> and the 'Unity' of Virtue .....	295
3. <i>σωφροσύνη</i> , <i>σοφία</i> and <i>δικαιοσύνη</i> : <i>Protagoras</i> .....	299
4. <i>σωφροσύνη</i> and <i>ἀνδρεία</i> : <i>Laches</i> .....	305
5. <i>σωφροσύνη</i> and <i>ἀνδρεία</i> : <i>Gorgias</i> .....	310
6. <i>σωφροσύνη</i> and <i>ἀνδρεία</i> : <i>Republic</i> and <i>Politicus</i> .....	317

7. Polysemous <i>σωφροσύνη</i> and the ‘Unity’ of Virtue: Conclusion.....	322
8. The Definition of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> : <i>Charmides</i> .....	323
8.1. The First Definition: <i>ἡσυχία</i> .....	326
8.2. The Second Definition: <i>αἰδώς</i> .....	329
8.3. The Third Definition: <i>τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν</i> .....	330
8.4. The Fourth Definition: Self-Knowledge .....	332
8.5. <i>Charmides</i> : Conclusions .....	339
9. The Definition of <i>σωφροσύνη</i> : <i>Republic</i> .....	341
10. Plato and <i>σωφροσύνη</i> : Conclusions .....	349
References .....	357
General Index.....	367
Index of Greek Terms .....	369
Selective Index of Works and Passages .....	371

## PREFACE

This book was originally a doctoral thesis prepared at Leiden University and defended there in the Spring of 2004. Accordingly, it owes much to the help and advice of many. My supervisor, Professor Ineke Sluiter, was an invaluable help and influence throughout the long period of its gestation. The members of my thesis committee, Dr Douglas Cairns, Professor Albert Rijksbaron, Dr Johannes van Ophuijsen, Professor Frans de Haas en Professor Henk Versnel, and Dr Marlein van Raalte all made valuable suggestions and corrected some major errors. Drs Susannah Herman did a very good job in correcting most of my obdurate sins against the rules of English syntax and style. The many remaining weaknesses and errors, both in style and content, are all mine.

Then, there are my teachers, friends and colleagues at Leiden. I feel a special word of thanks is due to Dr Marlein van Raalte, who was a great and beneficial influence on the choice of subject of my thesis, and Dr Peter Stork, for his teaching and support throughout a long education in Greek.

In its conception, however, this book owes perhaps most to the research interests of my original supervisor, the late Professor Sicking. His interest in literary texts that reflect the values of the ancient Greek *πόλις*, and, above all, his insistence on the vitality of a direct interaction between semantics, linguistics and the interpretation of texts, were a formative influence on my view of the classicist's profession. His deep interest in, and knowledge of classical music, was another great source of inspiration. I am aware that in many aspects the present text is different from what I would have envisaged in the years I have been studying and doing research under his supervision, but I hope he would still be in sympathy with its aims, and perhaps even with some of its results.



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. *Aims of the Investigation: σωφροσύνη in Plato and in non-philosophical Greek*

This study aims to address two related topics. First, it aims to give a synchronic semantic description of the uses of *σώφρων*, *σωφροσύνη*, *σωφρονεῖν* and cognates in non-philosophical classical Greek up to the time of Plato, which is in the first half of the fourth century BC. Second, it investigates Plato's use of these terms from the viewpoint of ordinary, non-philosophical language usage.

To start with the second aim, *σωφροσύνη* is unmistakably a central concept in Plato's ethical-political thought. But whatever its prominence, Plato's treatment of *σωφροσύνη* is by no means straightforward, and indeed often positively puzzling. A brief comparison between *Gorgias* and *Charmides* would serve to illustrate this point. In *Charmides*, Socrates and his interlocutors discuss a wealth of what seem to be familiar and traditional notions associated with the concept of *σωφροσύνη*, and dismiss most of them, without arriving at an acceptable alternative definition of the virtue. Strikingly, *Charmides* only hints at what may well be the most common use of *σωφροσύνη* of all: 'self-control' or 'control of desires'. This notion, seemingly so central to the concept, is hinted at in the dramatic setting of the dialogue, but then completely ignored in the discussion proper. (For an overview of the treatment of *σωφροσύνη* in *Chrm.*, see section 2 below; a fuller discussion follows in chapter 10.8.) In *Gorgias* (491D-E), by contrast, this notion of 'self-control' is introduced into the discussion by Socrates in just about the most emphatic way imaginable. Here, this other-regarding type of *σωφροσύνη* is firmly rejected by Callicles, champion of self-assertive *ἀνδρεία* and detractor of other-regarding *δικαιοσύνη*. Later on in the discussion, however, Callicles is forced to accept *σωφροσύνη* after all, if in a rather different sense, that of a 'sensible' or 'rational' order of

the soul (τάξις, 504A). This acceptance seems to be a crucial move, for Callicles is now made to concede that the ‘ordered’ soul has all the main virtues, including the *δικαιοσύνη* rejected earlier on. Thus, Callicles’ acceptance of *σωφροσύνη* seems to be fatal to the consistency of his position in the dialectical discussion. (For *σωφροσύνη* in *Gorgias*, see chapter 10.5.)

What are we to make of such proceedings? In the final chapter of this study, I will try to show that the two dialogues represent two characteristic but very different ways in which Plato deals with *σωφροσύνη*. In *Gorgias*, it would seem that Plato *exploits* the polysemy of the term for persuasive effect. Callicles unsurprisingly rejects *σωφροσύνη* in one of its typical uses, but Socrates forces him to accept it in another. Because the dialogue invokes these different uses of the term without in any way drawing attention to the fact that they are indeed different uses, it then seems that Callicles is caught in contradiction. By contrast, in *Charmides*, Plato apparently aims to *reduce* this polysemy. He gives an overview of a large number of traditional uses of *σωφροσύνη*, dismisses virtually all of them, and leaves what remains (*σωφροσύνη* in the sense of ‘control of desire’) to be ultimately incorporated in his own unified philosophical interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* as given in *Republic*.

So if it would seem that Plato both *exploits* and *reduces* the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* in ordinary language use, this raises the question how contemporary readers would feel about Plato’s treatment of the concept. Would they agree that he is giving a fair representation of what *σωφροσύνη* ‘really’ means, or would they rather feel that Plato distorts the virtue to fit it into his own conception of *ἀρετή*? Might it be that in establishing his technical, ‘philosophical’ interpretation of the virtue in terms of a ‘concord’ or ‘harmony’ between the various parts of the soul, Plato has given a significant ‘twist’ to the *σωφροσύνη* of ordinary language use? This idea was a working hypothesis for this study for some time, but one that, I think, has been falsified by my data. On the contrary, I think my study will show that Plato’s technical conception of *σωφροσύνη* as given in *Republic* sticks as closely as possible to what is *the* most central (‘prototypical’) interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* for the most ‘central’ members of ancient Greek society, adult male citizens.

In order to get a clear view of whether Plato conforms to traditional ideas, however, we need to have an exact view of *which* traditional uses of  $\omega\phi\rho\omicron\varsigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$  were available to him. Here we come to the first aim of this study mentioned above. What we need is a full synchronic description of the meaning of  $\acute{\omega}\phi\rho\omega\nu$  and cognate terms in the early fourth century BC. As will be argued in section 3, a fully adequate synchronic description has not been given so far. Most of the existing descriptions provide a limited number of basic ‘meanings’ and standard translations, and thus fail to do full justice to the polysemy of the terms. Others, notably the study by North (1966), are sensitive to this polysemy but do not sufficiently account for the similarities and differences between the various uses of our terms, and thus fail to show, so to speak, whatever ‘unity’ there may be behind the surface variety. It is the preliminary aim of this study, then, to give this full synchronic semantic description of  $\acute{\omega}\phi\rho\omega\nu$  and cognates in Plato’s time. In sections 4-6, the requirements a semantic description has to meet will be investigated more fully, and I will argue that modern cognitive linguistics, in particular the network model developed in its fullest form by Ronald Langacker (1987, 1991), can provide us with adequate tools for the semantic description of lexical items in classical Greek, and that such a model helps to establish an adequate and illuminating description of  $\acute{\omega}\phi\rho\omega\nu$  and cognates.

## 2. *The Meanings of $\omega\phi\rho\omicron\varsigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$ : An Overview provided by Plato’s Charmides*

A quick glance at the treatment of  $\omega\phi\rho\omicron\varsigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$  in *Chrm.* serves to suggest that its author is fully aware of the astounding variety of ways in which the word can be used. Here, it would seem, is a philosophical writer intent on giving a full account of the rich and complicated concept under consideration. It seems equally clear that Plato not only leaves no stone unturned, but also intends to take nothing for granted; *Charmides* seems to address virtually all traditional ideas concerning  $\omega\phi\rho\omicron\varsigma\acute{\upsilon}\nu\eta$ , and to show that most of these are problematic.



Four definitions are offered by Socrates' interlocutors, and all are rejected, two (offered by Charmides) almost immediately, and two (attributed to, or offered by, Critias) after extensive discussion and modification. They are the following:

1. (Charmides) *τὸ κοσμίως πάντα πράττειν καὶ ἡσυχῇ*, 'doing everything in an orderly manner and quietly' (Pl. *Chrm.* 159B).
2. (Charmides) *δοκεῖ ... αἰσχύνεσθαι ποιεῖν ἢ ὡφροσύνη καὶ αἰσχυντηλὸν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ εἶναι ὅπερ αἰδῶς ἢ ὡφροσύνη*, 'it seems ... that *ὡφροσύνη* causes a feeling of shame and makes a man liable to feel shame, and that it is in fact the same as *αἰδῶς*.' (Pl. *Chrm.* 160E).
3. (attributed to Critias) *τὸ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν*, 'doing one's own things' (Pl. *Chrm.* 161B).
- 3a. *τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν πράξιν*, 'doing good things' (163E10).
4. (Critias) *τὸ γινώσκειν ἑαυτόν*, 'knowing oneself' (Pl. *Chrm.* 164D).
- 4a. *ἐπιστήμη ... ἑαυτοῦ*, 'knowledge of oneself' (165C5-7).
- 4b. *τῶν τε ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη ... καὶ αὐτὴ ἑαυτῆς*, 'knowledge of other fields of knowledge and of knowledge itself' (166C2-3).
- 4c. *τὸ εἰδέναι ἃ τε οἶδεν καὶ ἃ μὴ οἶδεν*, 'to know what one does and does not know' (167A6-7).
- 4d. *εἰδέναι ... ὅτι οἶδεν καὶ ὅτι οὐκ οἶδεν*, 'to know that one does and does not know' (170D2-3).

The drift of the discussion would seem to suggest that the initial definitions, and especially those proposed by Charmides, offer superficial examples of *ὡφροσύνη*, and that the movement of the discussion is toward ever greater sophistication.<sup>1</sup>

Yet whatever their lack of sophistication, the initial definitions, quite unlike some of their modifications in the sophisticated discussion between Socrates and Critias, are convincing enough at first sight.<sup>2</sup> All seem to address notions commonly associated

<sup>1</sup> Thus, e.g., North (1966) 155, writes: 'The serious search for a definition now begins, following a symmetrical pattern which moves from the outer to the inner and from a lower level of popular morality and instinctive response to a higher one of intellectual analysis.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Heitsch (2000) 9 on Charmides' first definition: 'Als erster Versuch ist das eigentlich gar nicht so schlecht.' Stalley (2000) 267 moreover notes that 'the first part of the dialogue provides all the materials for a Platonic account of *ὡφροσύνη* as a condition of order and harmony in the soul.'

with the concept of *σωφροσύνη*. And those that are given relatively short shrift, Charmides' definitions, even more obviously reflect typical uses of the term than Critias'. The latter's definitions rather seem to reflect his elitist political bias, and in some of their modifications (4c and 4d in particular) define *σωφροσύνη* in terms of Socrates' own characteristic brand of self-knowledge. Here, Greek readers may well be more likely to feel surprise rather than agree instantaneously.

The initial definitions, then, are, if anything, incomplete rather than incorrect (or in any meaningful sense 'superficial') and, in combination, they go some way towards a fuller understanding of the concept. (This is comparable to the procedure of *Laches*, where the definitions of *ἀνδρεία* — 'remaining at one's post', *καρτερία* and some kind of 'wisdom' — are insufficient in isolation, but are effective in suggesting the range of the concept in combination.<sup>3</sup>) They do not by any means offer a *full* understanding of *σωφροσύνη*: for instance, any so-called 'intellectual', non-moral senses of the word ('soundness of mind', 'prudence') are entirely ignored apart from some hints near the end of the discussion that the benefit of *σωφροσύνη* should consist of proper management of the household and the state (171E). Even more remarkable is the fact that 'control of desires and pleasures', or 'self-control' — perhaps *the* most common interpretation of *σωφροσύνη*, and prominent in other dialogues like *Gorgias* and *Republic* — is likewise left out of the discussion. It is unmistakably invoked, however, in the dramatic setting of the dialogue: Socrates' hard-won mastery of his excitement caused by a glance inside Charmides' *himation* (155D3-4).<sup>4</sup> The dramatic setting offers more glimpses of the non-verbal symptoms of *σωφροσύνη*, most notably Charmides' modesty, expressed when he blushes before answering the question whether he himself is *σώφρων* (158C5). This points to an important link between the theme of the dialogue and the characters of its protagonists: while Charmides offers signs of youthful *σωφροσύνη*, both Critias and he are asso-

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., O'Brien (1963) 131-47.

<sup>4</sup> See Tuckey (1951) 19, North (1966) 154, Santas (1973) 106, Irwin (1995) 39, Kahn (1997) 187-8, Stalley (2000) 265-6.

ciated with *σωφροσύνη* in its political use as a slogan of the aristocratic/oligarchic movement that culminated in what was later seen as the ‘tyranny of the Thirty’.<sup>5</sup> In retrospect, fourth century readers of Plato of all persuasions are bound to agree that the Thirty did not truly possess the virtue so important to them — whether their *intention* to bring *σωφροσύνη* into Athenian politics is to be taken seriously or not. By contrast, the dialogue suggests, as we will see, that Socrates is *truly* *σώφρων*, by virtue of his self-control as well as in his characteristic activity of questioning the experts.<sup>6</sup>

So the dialogue points to at least five uses of *σωφροσύνη* (‘quietness’, ‘shame’, ‘doing one’s own things’, ‘self-knowledge’ and ‘control of desires’) that are familiar from common Greek usage, and these five uses are, at first sight, semantically quite unrelated. The definitions essentially consist of terms that are associated with *σωφροσύνη*, but would seem to belong to quite different contexts: thus, Charmides’ *κοσμίως πάντα πράττειν* and *ἡσυχία* and *αἰδώς* characterise behaviour applauded in boys; it is questionable in principle whether any of these terms are at all relevant to the behaviour of adult males (though Socrates shows himself to be *κόσμιος* in a quite different sense of the word when he masters his excitement). ‘Doing one’s own things’, and ‘knowing oneself’, on the other hand, evoke the domain of politics, and the ideals of citizenship in Critias’ favoured aristocratic/oligarchic society. (‘Knowing oneself’ is, in a quite different way, also characteristic of Socratic self-knowledge, this is one of the ways in which Socrates is established as the true *σώφρων* in the course of the dialogue.)

My claim will be that what we have here is a number of quite distinct uses of the word that are connected by what is called, after Wittgenstein, family resemblance. In terms of cognitive semantics, these uses are ‘nodes’, so to speak, of a network of related, if clearly distinct, uses. And, as the wealth of associated terms that come up in the course of the dialogue shows, these

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<sup>5</sup> For this use as a political slogan, see especially chapters 7.3 (Thucydides) and 9.8 (Plato).

<sup>6</sup> On the connections of Socrates with Critias and Charmides, see Stone (1980), Krentz (1992), esp. 82-3, and Notomi (2000).

uses interact with other terms within the realm of what we may call the ‘valuation of human behaviour’. The uses of *σωφροσύνη* form a network in themselves, but within a larger network of terms used in the (positive or negative) evaluation of human behaviour. At some points within the smaller network, there are clear connections with other terms within the larger whole, not only with those just mentioned, but also with more cognitive terms like *σοφία*, and even, as any reader of Plato will be aware, with the concept of *ἀνδρεία*, different though this may seem at first sight.

A full description of the larger network would, in a sense, amount to a description in semantic terms of what Plato himself designed with ontological aims: a full account of the uses of virtue terms in classical Greek and the connection between them, a description, that is, of what Plato perceives as the ‘unity’ behind the proliferation of individual ‘virtues’. That would go beyond the scope of this study. But a full semantic description of the use of *σώφρων* and cognates in non-philosophical Greek texts is a preliminary to an answer to the question to what extent Plato’s treatment of *σωφροσύνη* conforms to, or as the case may be, subtly differs from, common Greek usage: it is the aim of the present study to give such a description, and to assess on its basis how Plato deals with the term in *Charmides* and later dialogues.

### 3. *Problems with Traditional Semantic Descriptions of σωφροσύνη*

The existing descriptions of the meaning of *σώφρων* and cognates all basically distinguish between two main senses of the words, commonly described as an ‘intellectual’ and a ‘moral’ sense. For the intellectual sense, the translations commonly given include ‘of sound mind’, ‘discreet’, ‘prudent’ and (when used of non-animate entities) ‘reasonable’; the moral sense prompts translations like ‘having control of the sensual desires’, ‘temperate’, ‘self-controlled’, ‘chaste’ and (when used of non-animate entities) ‘moderate’.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> These are the translations given by LSJ s.v. *σώφρων*. Apart from this, the

The description of this distinction in terms of a contrast between an ‘intellectual’, ‘non-moral’, sense and a moral one has to be challenged. When — to take just one of the early instances of the noun that easily translate as prudence — Eurycleia claims that Telemachus *καὶ φροσύνησι νοήματα πατρός ἔκευθε* (*Od.* 23.30), ‘out of *φροσύνη* kept his father’s plans hidden’ (as well as his father’s presence), it is not the young man’s intellectual acumen that she praises, but rather his sense of responsibility, responsibility for Odysseus’ revenge and ultimately for the fate of his *oikos*. This ‘prudence’ is essentially the ability to take good care of the household, and thus, very probably, to live up to one of the main moral demands on the ‘man about the house’. Eurycleia is in fact suggesting that Telemachus is successfully growing into his role of responsible adult male.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it is mislead-

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lemma discusses the use of τὸ *σῶφρον* as a periphrasis for the quality of *σῶφροσύνη* (sub II.3), and some instances of the adverb (sub III).

For *σῶφρονέω*, LSJ give the following: 1. ‘to be sound of mind’, 2. ‘to be temperate, moderate, show self-control’, 3. ‘come to one’s senses’, ‘learn moderation’, 4. τὰ *σεσῶφρονημένα ἐν τῷ βίῳ μοι*, ‘things I had done with discretion’ (Aeschin. 2.4). These last two are not separate meanings of the lexical item *σῶφρονεῖν* as such, but concern (3) the use of the present and aorist stems in contexts where they require ‘inchoative’ or ‘ingressive’ interpretation, and (4) a rare use of the perfect participle of the middle voice.

For *σῶφροσύνη*, LSJ give: 1. ‘soundness of mind’, ‘prudence’, ‘discretion’, 2. ‘moderation in sensual desires’, ‘temperance’, ‘self-control’, 3. (in a political sense) ‘a moderate form of government’. This third sense, that from its translation would seem to be the application of the ‘moral’ sense of *σῶφροσύνη* to the context of politics, reflects the adaptation of *σῶφροσύνη* as a political slogan of the oligarchic movement in Athens, which is also ultimately behind the definition τὰ *ἐαυτοῦ πράττειν*, as given by Critias in *Chrm.* The translation ‘a moderate form of government’ is rather too innocuous for the sarcastic use of the word at Th. 8.64 that LSJ cite. (See ch. 7.2.3).

The basic bi-partition that LSJ give turns up in all other descriptions. Thus, De Vries (1943) 99 states that ‘*σῶφροσύνη* est santé d’esprit, soit intellectuelle, soit éthique’, before adding the significant modification: ‘Bien que ces deux moments divergent, ils ne sont pas séparés dans la conscience grecque.’

North (1966) is generally more sensitive to the polysemy of the words, but starts from the same basic distinction. Thus, on p. 3, she notes that ‘*σῶφροσύνη* is basically ‘soundness of mind’ — that is, the state of having one’s *intellect* unimpaired’ [my italics], and suggests that at what she calls the earliest stage of its history [i.e. in the Homeric poems], *σῶφροσύνη* is ‘devoid of moral and religious implications’ (*ibidem*).

<sup>8</sup> Unlike Penelope, Homer’s public is probably aware that it was Odysseus himself who told Telemachus to keep quiet. Thus, they may also regard Telemachus as performing a different kind of moral behaviour associated with

ing to suggest that the use of *καοφροσύνησι* is here ‘unencumbered by moral or religious accretions’.<sup>9</sup> Rather, the distinction between this ‘prudential sense’ and other more conspicuously moral senses would seem to be that in the first use, presence or absence of *καοφροσύνη* primarily affects the self-interest of the agent and his dependants, whereas in the second, *καοφροσύνη* primarily regards the agent’s conduct vis-à-vis ‘others’.

Things are rather similar with another allegedly non-moral sense of *καοφροσύνη*, ‘soundness of mind’. When Herodotus relates how Cambyses, after protracted madness, *ἐκαφρόνησε*, ‘came to his senses’, or ‘was in a normal state of mind again’ (Hdt. 3.64), the use of the verb does indeed focus on Cambyses’ state of mind (though again, there is no hint of exceptional *intellectual* ability, rather of mental normality restored). But notions of morality are by no means absent, for it was clear throughout the preceding narrative that Cambyses’ madness was the source of his many crimes, and Herodotus’ public now knows that Cambyses can be expected to behave rather differently during the short remainder of his life. Again, this is not strictly speaking a non-moral use of the word; rather, the use of the word draws attention primarily to Cambyses’ state of mind, and only indirectly to the moral behaviour that results from it. In the ‘prudential’ sense of the word, encountered in the example from *Od.* 23 above, this was the other way round: Penelope is hardly invited to reflect on the state of Telemachus’ mind, rather she is to note that the young man acted responsibly, and then quickly to follow Eurycleia downstairs.

The distinction between ‘soundness of mind’, ‘prudence’ and the more conspicuously moral uses of the word, then, is not a clear-cut distinction between ‘non-moral’ and ‘moral’ uses of the word: rather, one should say that when *καοφροσύνη* translates as ‘soundness of mind’, the focus is *primarily* on a person’s state of mind, and only *indirectly* on his behaviour versus others. When *καοφροσύνη* translates as ‘prudence’, the focus is primarily on a

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*καοφροσύνη*, that of the obedient son rather than the brave young man.  
<sup>9</sup> North (1966), 4.

person's responsibility for his self-interest, rather than on his obligations with regard to others.

If so, there is *a priori* little to support the idea that the supposedly non-moral senses represent the 'original' meanings of the words, as etymology<sup>10</sup> might be taken to suggest, and that the 'moral' ones all result from later developments. The strongest adherent of this theory is North (1966), and the problems connected with such an approach are particularly conspicuous in the earlier chapters of her generally most valuable book. Even regarding the four instances in the Homeric poems, North suggests that there are two that are 'closest to its original significance' and two others that are 'more suggestive of later semantic developments'.<sup>11</sup> If so, one must simply conclude that the Homeric data do not warrant the isolation of 'soundness of mind' or 'prudence' as an 'original significance'. North is over-emphasising the diachronic perspective here.

For similar reasons, North's contention that the quality of *σωφροσύνη* is 'of minor importance to the heroic age' (p. 2) must at least be modified. The use of *σώφρων* and *σωφροσύνη* in Homer is indeed remarkably limited when compared to later writers. However, as the chapter on the Homeric poems will show, many types of behaviour that are evaluated elsewhere in terms of *σωφροσύνη* are valued highly indeed, even if the epics use different value terms. Here, the richness of epic diction is a part of the explanation. For some of the later senses of *σώφρων/σωφροσύνη*, the epic poems have separate words that are not current in prose or other forms of poetry. North does not note this, which is surprising in view of the fact that she is usually always prepared 'to take into account the existence of the *concept* of *sophrosyne*, even when expressed in other terms'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> There is no doubt that *σώφρων* is a compound of *σῶς/σῶς* ('safe, sound') and the lengthened o-grade of the root *-φρεν-* ('mind'). See Frisk, s.v., Chantraine s.v., and North (1966) 3n.10.

<sup>11</sup> North (1966) 3-4.

<sup>12</sup> North (1966), ix. This tendency is of course fully justified in principle (there is no doubt, for instance, that Socrates in *Chrm.* hints that he is *σώφρων* in the sense of 'in control of his desires' even without using the word, and that readers are expected to be fully aware of the point), but it involves some risks of its own.

Over-emphasis of the diachronic perspective is indeed a recurrent feature of North's study, which approaches the theme of *σωφροσύνη* very much from the perspective of *Ideengeschichte*. And while North shows considerable sensitivity to the rich variety of ideas connected with the concept, a full synchronic conspectus of the uses of the words, and a systematic semantic account of the resemblance and differences between them, is not on her agenda. This is regrettable, for it seems useful with many authors, and perhaps never more so than in the case of Plato, to have a precise account of the uses of the word that were available to them, and to see which of these uses they exploited, or ignored. The central chapters of the present study aim to gather, period by period and genre by genre (in order not to lose sight of possible generic differences or even diachronic developments altogether), the building-blocks for a synchronic conspectus of the uses of *σωφροσύνη* available to Plato. After taking stock of them, it will be possible to see how Plato uses them, to which extent he follows traditional ideas, and in which respects, as the

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In some contexts, it is not necessarily very significant that *σωφροσύνη* is not mentioned. On Hesiod, North writes: 'Although Hesiod nowhere uses the word *σωφρων*, which may not yet be current in mainland Greece, his view of life and of the relations between god and man is thoroughly imbued with sophrosyne in one of its later aspects: as the spirit of *Mēden agan* ('Nothing in excess.').' (p. 9) Does this imply that Hesiod wished to express the concept of *σωφροσύνη* but did not have the word available? Or did the poet did not feel the need to back up his appeal to *δίκη* in *Works and Days* with a subsidiary appeal to *σωφροσύνη*, when it seems already sufficiently clear what he meant? In this case, I do not see how such matters can be decided.

Elsewhere, it may well be significant that *σωφροσύνη* is *not* explicitly mentioned. Herodotus and Aeschylus' *Persians*, offer clear examples here: 'Although Herodotus is the most fertile source in Greek prose of stories illustrating traditional ideas of sophrosyne, he applies the word to none of the typical situations, and indeed he never uses the noun.' (p. 28). 'Among the antitheses of the *Persians* the fundamental contrast, and the one that includes all the others, is that between *ὑβρις* and *σωφροσύνη*.' (p. 34). Indeed, Herodotus leaves no doubt that *some* oriental kings, notably the mad Cambyses and the rash Xerxes lack *σωφροσύνη* at crucial stages of their careers, and Darius in Aeschylus' play confirms this for Xerxes. But both authors carefully avoid reducing the central conflicts of their works to a simplified clash between 'oriental' *ὑβρις* and 'Greek' *σωφροσύνη*. In both authors, the characters who are portrayed as *σώφρονες* are the king's counsellors (Otanes, Artabanus, Demaratus, the elders of the chorus) rather than his opponents.



case may be, he extends or reduces the concept to suit his own purposes.

Let us now return to our survey of the traditional descriptions of *σωφροσύνη*. When we turn from the so-called ‘intellectual’ uses (the uses that focus on the agent’s mental state or sense of responsibility) to the second main category of so-called ‘moral’ uses (the uses that focus on the agent’s conduct vis-à-vis others), a quick glance at the definitions in *Charmides* suffices to see that there is a greater variety of uses in this last group than the concise treatment of *σωφροσύνη* in lexica suggests. In fact, the standard translations that the dictionaries offer (such as ‘temperance’, ‘self-control’, ‘chastity’, ‘moderation’) do not quite fit any of the four basic definitions given in the dialogue. Charmides’ first definition suggests that *σωφροσύνη* also applies to orderly behaviour and obedience; his second definition (*αἰδώς*) is probably best exemplified by his timid hesitation (visible by blushing, and described by Socrates the narrator as ‘his liability to feel shame’, *τὸ αἰσχυντηλὸν αὐτοῦ*, 158C5-6) to answer the question whether he is *σώφρων* himself. Charmides here shows two types of ‘modesty’ at the same time: he is ashamed to claim *σωφροσύνη* for himself, but also to contradict his uncle and others who are lavish in their praise of him on this particular point. Critias’ *τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν* on the other hand places *σωφροσύνη* in the political sphere and commends a line of non-interference and restraint, for which ‘moderation’ is a rather too general translation. By contrast, his second definition, *τὸ γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτόν*, aims less clearly at any specific type of behaviour. Rather, it would seem to suggest that *σωφροσύνη* is a type of self-awareness (including undoubtedly, in Critias’ case, ‘class awareness’) and that this self-awareness is bound to prevent a man from doing things that do not accord with his class and status, and his general position in life.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Socrates of course almost immediately diverts attention from the social implications of the definition to its ‘epistemological’ complications. But he also states that the benefit of *σωφροσύνη* should be that one is able to prevent oneself and others from doing things without the necessary expertise (171D-172A); this seems to imply a ‘division of labour’ between classes of citizens that implic-

So we are confronted here with a variety of uses that is considerably greater than a concise list of standard translations from the dictionaries would suggest. North's study (1966) is useful in identifying most of these as they turn up in her traversal of Greek literature. What has been less well established is, in which respects these uses resemble, and differ from, each other. One obvious but problematic resemblance between these other-regarding uses is that *σωφροσύνη* here always seems to be, in a way, negatively defined: it seems to provide, essentially, a check for socially unacceptable behaviour. This is not so obviously the case for the 'prudential' use of *σωφροσύνη*, where it would seem entirely conceivable that good care of the interests of oneself and one's dependants can on occasion function as a spur to action rather than a summons to caution. North indeed strongly argues that 'both in its essence and in its most typical manifestations [*σωφροσύνη*] is neither negative nor merely cautious. Rather it is the harmonious product of intense passion under perfect control...'.<sup>14</sup> But remarks like these regard the appreciation of *σωφροσύνη* rather than its semantics: even if *σωφροσύνη* itself is greatly valued (as it always seems to be throughout Greek culture), that does not at all preclude the possibility that in many cases it typically manifests itself in the repression of some types of behaviour, and that it is, in this sense, indeed negatively defined.

So it seems likely that these so-called moral senses show significant resemblance to one another on a certain level of abstraction, but one must never underestimate the fact that there are appreciable and very real differences between the particular uses on the surface level of language use. This is even the case with senses that seem strongly related. To give an obvious instance, it is not difficult to see that there is a correspondence between 'control of one's desires' in males, and the 'chastity' applauded in women. But in real life, they commend very different types of behaviour. When a Greek woman is called *σώφρων*, we are not so much invited to conclude that she can control her impulses, but simply that she is faithful and loyal to her husband.

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itly acknowledges Critias' class awareness.

<sup>14</sup> North (1966), ix-x.

Again, this type of marital fidelity differs significantly from the total virginity required from unmarried girls. In the case of boys, *ωφροσύνη* in sexual matters manifests itself differently again, in a circumspect dealing with *ἐρασταί* for instance. Thus, age and gender roles and social setting provide for very different uses of the word even where, on a certain level of abstraction, these uses would seem closely related.

#### 4. *Contrasting Theories of Language And Meaning: Structuralist Versus Cognitive Approaches*

In this study, I am going to use a model of semantic description taken from the field of cognitive grammar, the so-called ‘network’ model developed to its fullest degree by Langacker.<sup>15</sup> Cognitive grammar is designed to cover the description of more or less the whole range of linguistic phenomena, including phonology,<sup>16</sup> morphology,<sup>17</sup> lexical semantics,<sup>18</sup> and syntactic categories.<sup>19</sup> Some features of cognitive linguistics have typically been designed for the description of ‘living’ languages. Prototype effects, especially, are relatively easily identified if a control group of native speakers is at hand, and may not be always as readily identifiable in a corpus of texts from a dead language. In section 7 below, I will briefly deal with the identification of prototype effects in texts from a dead language.

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<sup>15</sup> The standard texts are Langacker (1987) and (1991), supplemented by Langacker (1990) and (1999). Accessible introductions to the field are offered by Langacker (1988), Taylor (1995), (1996). An excellent textbook on cognitive grammar is now offered by Taylor (2002).

<sup>16</sup> On phonology in cognitive grammar, see Langacker (1987), esp. 328-48 and 388-401. Introductory discussions in Taylor (1995) 222-38, Taylor (2002) 78-95 (references for further reading on p. 95).

<sup>17</sup> See many places in Langacker (1987), also (1999) 131-42, and Taylor (2002) 265-80.

<sup>18</sup> Arguably, cognitive grammar’s successful treatment of polysemy in lexical semantics is its greatest source of popularity. A seminal study is Brugman (1988, 1981) on *over*, discussed in Lakoff (1987) and elsewhere. For an overview of recent approaches see Ravin and Leacock (2000).

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., Langacker (1991) 240-81 on tense, *ibid.* 249-81 on modality.

In the field of classics, the model has proven its value in the description of a complex grammatical category, the middle voice of the Greek verb, by R.J. Allan (2003). This study hopes to show that it may also be applied successfully in the field of lexical semantics.

However, the theory may not yet be universally familiar to, and accepted by, classical philologists. Studies of — culturally significant — words and concepts in the field of Ancient Greek, that naturally belong to the field of lexical semantics, are often remarkably reticent on the semantic models they use, and in practice work on the assumptions of ‘classical’ notions of categorisation that can ultimately be traced back to Aristotle. North (1966) is a good example, but in the case of many more recent studies, similar things can be said. Thus, Cairns (1993) on *αἰδώς*, offers an excellent introduction focusing in particular on *αἰδώς* as an emotion, and on the roles of ‘shame’ and ‘guilt’ with respect to *αἰδώς* (including a substantial reappraisal of the — in its original application — over-simplified opposition of ‘shame cultures’ versus ‘guilt cultures’). On the level of semantics, he argues that *αἰδώς*-terms are used in different senses that native speakers would have recognised as such, but warns that his aim is to describe the concept of *αἰδώς* as a whole, and avoid ‘the dangers of dividing the inseparable that are inherent in the ‘separate meanings’ approach’.<sup>20</sup> He then proceeds, in the main body of the work, to offer a very thorough and illuminating discussion of the material, mostly by means of solidly traditional ‘close reading’.

So far, I have nothing to disagree with. On the contrary, as far as the manner of approaching the material by means of close reading is concerned, I can only hope that this study will not fall conspicuously short of the standards upheld by Cairns’ study. But I do think that it is worth taking a further step, and describing the data from our texts in terms of the semantic model offered by cognitive linguistics. (I will mainly take this extra step in chapter 9, which gives a semantic description of *ώφρων* and cognates on the basis of the texts discussed in chapters 2-8.). The

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<sup>20</sup> Cairns (1993) 1.

asset of the semantic model offered by cognitive grammar is that it is eminently sensitive to *both* the concept as a whole, *and* the various typical and rather less typical individual uses of our terms that invoke this concept, and that the model offers some good tools to describe how the ‘parts’ relate to the ‘whole’ (notably by means of the notions ‘family resemblance’ and ‘prototypicality’). In the case of *ωφροσύνη*, at any rate, the description helps us to see at a higher level of abstraction which uses of *ώφρων* and cognates Plato uses and which he ignores, and it will, I think, show that this ‘selection’ is far from arbitrary. Thus, my claim is that the application of this semantic model to my material increases the explanatory force of my description, and to this extent it may be considered useful on a practical level, even to those who are not naturally in sympathy with its theoretical assumptions.

Traditional theories of lexical semantics have often been explicitly or implicitly influenced by structuralism in its insistence that meaning is a language-immanent phenomenon: the meaning of a linguistic form is determined by the language system itself, rather than by any relation between the linguistic form and the ‘world’ outside.<sup>21</sup> A natural concomitant of this language-immanent approach is that the lexical meaning of an item in the lexicon has been traditionally conceived as a fixed, isolated entity, defined in terms of the so-called classical category (itself a distant, and arguably somewhat simplified,<sup>22</sup> derivative of Aristotle’s theory of categorisation).

Now the classical category is remarkably successful as a tool for finding similarities between its members, and thus for establishing similarities between two uses of a lexical item. If, for instance, all uses of *ώφρων* share the characteristic that someone who is *ώφρων* is, somehow, ‘of sound mind’, a description of

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<sup>21</sup> For one example among many, see Lyons (1968). A telling remark is *ibid.* 427: ‘Since sense is to be defined in terms of relationships which hold between vocabulary-items, it carries with it no presuppositions about the existence of objects and properties outside the vocabulary of the language in question.’ For a discussion, see Taylor (1995) 34-6. Lyons (1995) incorporates some recent developments, notably prototype theory, without giving up the conception of ‘sense’ as a language-immanent phenomenon.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Taylor (1995) 24n.1.

*κῶφρων* in terms of a classical category will readily identify ‘of sound mind’ as a necessary feature of all members of the category *κῶφρων*. The classical category is also useful for detecting sense relations between one item and a number of related terms (such as synonyms, hyponyms, antonyms etc.). For instance, for those uses of *κῶφρων* that commend abstention from violence and are contrasted to terms from the lexeme *ῥβρις*, categorisation along classical lines will easily identify presence versus absence of ‘violence’ as the critical feature determining the sense relation of antonymy between the two terms.

The classical category has been less successful, however, in dealing with polysemy, that is in accounting for dissimilarities between various uses of a term. This we will see more fully in our discussion, in the next section, of the contrast between the ‘classical’ and the ‘cognitive’ conception of categories, here I will just mention some of the key issues.

Usually, there are many salient surface differences between various uses of a term. In the classical approach, there are basically two options for dealing with these surface differences. One is to relegate them from the realm of (language-immanent) linguistic meaning proper to the realm of ‘reference’, where linguistic terms are applied to certain entities and contextual situations in the world outside. The other is to break up the category, and to assume that a lexical item has two or more distinct lexical meanings.

Both procedures have their disadvantages when applied in isolation. If all surface differences in use are regarded as a matter of reference, the lexical meaning itself runs the risk of becoming highly abstract and under-descriptive. On the other hand, if one lexical item is assumed to have a very large number of lexical meanings, the difference between ‘sense’ and ‘reference’ ultimately breaks down.<sup>23</sup> Consider the case of *κῶφρων*. Let us assume we are confronted with a man who ‘prudently’ manages his own affairs, a woman who is loyal to her husband, a boy who is

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<sup>23</sup> It is such an approach, not — as far as I can see — especially popular in the field of lexical semantics in classics that really runs the risk of ‘dividing the inseparable’ (Cairns (1993) 1, quoted above).

well-behaved, and a madman who has come to his senses. All four can reasonably be called *σώφρονες*. How to deal with the phenomenon? Are we to suppose that *σώφρων* means something like ‘of sound mind’, and that the considerable differences between our four examples of *σώφρονες* are the result of the application of this general term to four quite different individuals in quite different settings? Or are we to take it that ‘sane’, ‘prudent’, ‘loyal’ and ‘orderly’ are four separate, and in principle quite unrelated ‘meanings’ of the word? It would seem that the truth is somewhere in between. The language user will have a separate use of *σώφρων* as applied to loyal women available in his mind, and will be able to use the term this way without going through the laborious process of establishing again and again what exactly *σώφρων* in the case of married women may mean. On the other hand, he will at least be dimly aware that this use is not an entirely separate meaning of the term, but one that resembles other uses of *σώφρων* to commend types of ‘decent’ behaviour.

Most traditional semantic lexical descriptions are, in fact, a kind of compromise between the two approaches to polysemy. Entries in the lexicon, for example, will typically identify a relatively limited number of separate ‘senses’ of a term, which turn out to acquire a different flavour according to context. In a Greek-English lexicon, an entry will define a relatively limited number of ‘meanings’, but will often offer a considerably larger number of translations for each of these ‘meanings’. In case of *σώφρων*, we have seen how the lexica distinguish between a non-moral and a moral sense of the word, but offer several translations for each of these main groups, see section 3 above. However, it is usually quite implicit by means of which criteria these distinctions are made, and much is to be gained if they can be made explicit.

There was every reason, then, to give up the definition of meaning as an abstract linguistic phenomenon, irrespective of its relation to human cognition and the world out there. The first general attempt to tie language more firmly to human cognition

was Chomsky's generative-transformational paradigm.<sup>24</sup> Chomsky took the step of regarding language as a product of the human mind, rather than an abstract system of its own. However, most of Chomsky's followers have focused on the mind as a faculty for generating grammatically correct sentences, and have tried to establish the rules which govern this generating of languages. The effect is a focus on 'grammar' to the detriment of 'semantics', which in fact all but dropped out of the field of linguistics proper.<sup>25</sup>

The second cognitive revolution occurred when linguists started to regard not only the grammar of language as a product of the human mind, but also its contents. Cognitive linguistics, of which the theory of cognitive grammar that I use here is a distinct branch, treats all linguistic meaning in terms of concepts within the human mind. They have abandoned the treatment of language as an autonomous system, and this has opened the way for a much more open, inclusive, and flexible approach to semantic 'categories'. For our purpose, the contrast between the 'classical' and the 'cognitive' conception of categories is the most relevant theoretical issue, and I will focus on this contrast in more detail in the next section.<sup>26</sup>

### 5. *Contrasting Conceptions of Categorisation: The 'Classical' Approach Versus Cognitive Linguistics*

(1) As we have seen in section 4 above, the 'classical' approach to categories defines a category as *a conjunction of necessary and sufficient binary features*. If, for example, 'man' (in its use of 'human being' rather than 'male human being') is defined as a 'TWO-FOOTED' and 'ANIMATE' being,<sup>27</sup> all two-footed (as opposed

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<sup>24</sup> See, for instance, Chomsky (1980).

<sup>25</sup> These remarks are entirely to be taken from a historical perspective; I am fully aware that I am ignoring later developments in generative grammar that try to do fuller justice to the level of semantics.

<sup>26</sup> A classic discussion of categorisation is Lakoff (1987); good remarks also in Taylor (1995).

<sup>27</sup> The example is taken from Arist. *Metaph.* 4.4.8.



to non-two-footed, e.g. four-footed or six-footed) animate beings will classify as members of the category 'man', and all beings that are not two-footed or inanimate will automatically be excluded. As we have seen, the advantages of these binary features are obvious: they will allow for easy classification of two-footed animates as instances of the class of 'man', and for easy identification of the sense relation between 'man' and 'dog' ('TWO-FOOTED' versus 'NON-TWO-FOOTED') or 'man' and 'thing' ('ANIMATE' versus 'INANIMATE'). Herein lies the appeal of the classical category to theories treating meaning as an intra-lingual system of sense relations.

(2) Another thing to be noted about classical categories is that *categories have clear boundaries*: membership of a classical category is matter of 'yes' or 'no'; the theory does not allow for ambiguous cases, for entities which 'up to a point' or 'in some way' belong to the category, but which in other ways do not. Biological kinds and species, like 'bird' and 'mammal' seem to offer examples of categories where such clear-cut divisions work perfectly well, yet one only has to think of a penguin, or an ostrich, to realise that even in the field of biology, for the layman at least, the boundaries may not be so clear after all.

(3) Thirdly, and finally, in a classical category, there are no differences of degree of membership: *all members of a category have equal status*. A member of any category will only belong to the category if it exhibits all the defining features of the category; otherwise, it will be excluded. All animals are equal, so to speak, and none are more equal than others.

All three properties of classical categories have been challenged in the course of the past century, and with good reason.

(1) It is more often than not impossible to define a set of sufficient and necessary conditions that apply to *all* members of a category. The classical example here is Wittgenstein's treatment of the word *Spiel* ('game').<sup>28</sup> As Wittgenstein shows, there is an immense range of things and activities that are rightly called 'games' (including Olympic games, card games, ball games, mind games, and now — of course — computer games), yet

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<sup>28</sup> Wittgenstein (1967) 48-9 = (1978) 31-3.

none of the attributes that seems characteristic of most games apply to all members of the category. 'Amusement' seems to be an important attribute of many games, but games that are practised on a professional level, such as football or chess, are not necessarily done for amusement; 'amusement' is certainly not an attribute of the German term 'Spiel' in expressions like 'auf dem Spiel stehen' (to be at stake) or 'laß mich aus dem Spiel' ('do not involve me in this'). Many games involve competition, but *solitaire* does not, and is still a game. Many games involve a playing field and instruments (even if very different ones), such as football and chess; but 'hints' or riddles do not.

Rather than sharing a complete set of essential features, then, games are connected to each other by sharing some attributes with some games, and others with others. There may even be games which have very little in common. (Think of football versus a mind game.) Wittgenstein describes these relations of similarity and dissimilarity in terms of the family resemblance between various individual members of a family.

Now 'game' is a word that in many of its typical explications describes a *genus* with many different *species*, and it might seem to represent a case where the classical approach is very likely to run into trouble ('man' as a *species*-term was not) and the Wittgensteinian approach might seem to be especially designed for such abstract, complex and inclusive categories. But let's turn from 'game' to one of the basic-level entities constituting a game, football. We have the game played according to the official rules, exercised on various levels of professionalism, but also more loosely organised games of football as played on the streets or in the park on a summer evening. The ball itself is also called football. And in the expression 'in football', the word often describes football as a professional trade. Does this use of 'football' have anything in common with the physical object?

Even with names, which would seem to represent clear-cut one-member-categories (in principle at least), things may turn out not to be so simple. The name Mahler is used to designate the man Mahler, but also to designate his music, as it may be played in Amsterdam or Vienna or wherever, or as it may be played back from compact discs in your living room. Do the man and his music have any attributes in common? Many people

would like to think so, but it may not be easy to say which characteristics exactly. And in ‘stored under Mahler’, the name probably designates a specific area of a shop, where scores or discs of Mahler’s music may be found (or alternatively, a group of entries in a database).

How would this turn out in the case of an abstract ‘quality’ like *σωφρων*? It may still turn out to be the case that all uses of the word do indeed share one or two characteristics, e.g. that they imply a positive evaluation or that they have something to do with a mind that functions properly. But how much does this say about the individual uses? Let’s consider the case of the Greek male who calls his wife *σωφρων* (Lysias’ Euphiletus, say, at a certain stage in his married life.) What such a man means, first and foremost, is that his wife is loyal to him. Does this entail that she must also be ‘of sound mind’? Maybe it does, but that does not seem to be what is on the speaker’s mind. Is it conceivable that a wife is called *σωφρων* who is eminently faithful, yet obviously deranged? There does not seem to be a reason *a priori* why it should *not* be conceivable. The problem with a dead language here is that you cannot always check, but such a use of the term may well be paradoxical rather than impossible.<sup>29</sup> (As we will see in chapter 6, Euripides seems especially fond of formulating paradoxes of this type.) The point is, probably, that ‘soundness of mind’ is usually not a very marked, or relevant, characteristic of the *σωφρων* wife. If asked, the Greek man would probably have been likely to answer that a *σωφρων* wife will also be mentally sane, but sanity does not go far to explain what her fidelity is all about.

That is to say, even if it turns out to be possible to identify a single characteristic shared by all uses of *σωφρων*, overemphasis of this characteristic is likely to give a distorted view of the actual use of the word. Surface meanings like ‘faithful’, ‘loyal’ are

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<sup>29</sup> A similar paradox is formulated in Pl. *Prt.* 333B8-9, where it is said that many people hold that it is possible to be *σωφρων* while committing injustice (*ἀδίκων ... σωφρονεῖν*). Protagoras himself is reluctant to admit this possibility, and in view of that the fact that there is often a close connexion between the two virtues, his reluctance seems quite reasonable. See chapter 10.3.

much more salient than any context-independent abstract attributes shared by one use and its distant cousin.

(2) Categories have no clear boundaries. Seminal work in this field was done by the experiments of W. Labov.<sup>30</sup> Labov studied the categorisation of household utensils like cups, bowls and vases (which share the attribute of being receptacles). He found that drawings of receptacles with a maximum width equal to its depth and with a handle, were unanimously called 'cups'. As the objects' width increases as compared to their depth, more and more subjects called the objects 'bowls' rather than 'cups', but there was no clear boundary between the two categories. Similar, with increasing depth, the objects gradually came to be classified as 'vases' rather than 'cups'. Again there were no clear boundaries. Classifications were influenced by such factors as presence and prominence of a handle, and also by the imagined uses for the receptacles in question, but in all these cases, people did not agree on the categorisation of the objects in a 'borderline' area.

This means that in a category, there are clear examples as opposed to borderline cases where one can doubt if they qualify for inclusion in the category. A medium-sized receptacle with a handle will be a cup, but a shallow receptacle without a handle will arguably be more of a bowl, even if perhaps someone dislikes hot coffee and drinks his coffee from such a receptacle. One may compare the layman's response 'that is not music' to many types of twentieth-century music. Here, for many, too many attributes characteristic of most types of classical western music (major-minor tonality, thematic development, harmonic progression, expectations with regard to form) are missing or not readily discernible: as a result, the piece in question does not qualify for whole-hearted inclusion in the category of 'music'.

In dealing with *ωφροσύνη*, we may expect to encounter similar 'borderline cases' in the case of individual examples. Among women, Andromache and Penelope seem to be indubitably *ώφρων*, and Helena evidently is not. But Medea may well be only a borderline case at best, even though she may reasonably be said to exhibit some typical characteristics of the *ώφρων* wife,

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<sup>30</sup> Labov (1973).

notably — up to the start of Euripides' play, at least — undeniable loyalty to Jason. Alcestis is a *κῶφρων* wife whose loyalty is carried to the extreme of self-sacrifice. (Again, Euripides seems especially fond of such 'extreme' examples.)

(3) It would seem, then, that not all members of a category have equal status: 'borderline' cases are bad examples of a category, and conversely, very 'central' cases are rather better ones. Here, we come to a phenomenon that complements the fuzziness of the category at its boundaries: the so-called prototype effects, first described in detail by Eleanor Rosch. In one of her classic studies,<sup>31</sup> Rosch asked her subjects to rate various objects of household items, and say to what extent they constituted good examples of furniture. It turned out that chairs, couches and tables were significantly better examples of furniture than pianos or cushions; ashtrays, fans and telephones were among the worst examples. In another experiment, Rosch found that for Northern Americans, a 'robin' is a better example of a bird than a 'duck'; consequently, the 'robin' was more often named as an example of a bird, and it took less time for a robin to be correctly identified as a bird than it did for a duck.<sup>32</sup>

Categories are structured, then, around prototypes: central cases that form 'normal' good examples of its category.<sup>33</sup> In the examples given above, prototypicality will in part be an effect of physical size and shape as well as of function. An ashtray is very probably less of a piece of furniture than a couch because it does not fill a room in the way that a couch may do, and because it will also be used outside, in a way that a couch will normally not. Cultural aspects may well play a role too: for some, a television set may well be more of a piece of furniture than for others.

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<sup>31</sup> Rosch (1975a) 199-233.

<sup>32</sup> Rosch (1973) 111-44.

<sup>33</sup> A related phenomenon that I will not discuss extensively here is that of *stereotypicality*. Stereotype effects occur when it is suggested that *all* members of a certain group or category evince the typical characteristics. Thus, the notion of stereotypicality is vital to the description of markers such as 'each', 'every', 'all' and *similia*. In our study of *κωφροσύνη*, we will meet some stereotype effects, in cases when it is suggested, e.g., that women are *generally* unfaithful, that the young are *generally* rash and violent, etcetera. On stereotypes in cognitive semantics, see, e.g., Verkuyl (2000).

(Rosch's subjects were college students.) And where for North Americans, a robin was a better bird than a duck, the same does not necessary hold for inhabitants of Amsterdam with its many canals (and with its Dam square crowded by pigeons). Significantly, the structure of the category depends on the minds of the language users, and this is one reason why a study of semantics will always also be a study of culture.

In the classical examples referred to above, prototype effects were identified in the use of generic nouns, where the various members of the categories are also designated by nouns. But it has been shown that prototype effects also show up in more abstract categories, e.g. 'telling a lie',<sup>34</sup> verbs such as 'look', 'kill', 'speak' and 'walk',<sup>35</sup> and a highly abstract category like 'tallness',<sup>36</sup>

And prototype effects do not only occur between sub-groups of the larger class, but also of course between various members of one sub-group. Thus, if a television set is a less than typical piece of furniture, a laptop transmitting, via the internet, the programme of a television channel, is a far more unusual example of a television set than the piece of furniture in the corner of one's living room, and to that extent, probably, also an even more peripheral instance of a piece of furniture.

On the basis of cognitive grammar's view of categories, then, one would describe the meaning of lexical item in terms of an 'open' category in the following terms:

- The meaning of a lexical item is a cognitive concept that is structured as an open category, consisting of various groups of uses of the lexical item in question. These groups of uses are connected with each other in a network by family resemblance: some uses share some attributes with some other uses, and others with others. There may be uses of the term which have little or nothing in common at all. (E.g. the *κύφρων* loyal wife vs. the *κύφρων* sane person.)

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<sup>34</sup> Coleman & Kay (1981),

<sup>35</sup> Pulman (1983)

<sup>36</sup> Dirven & Talor (1988) 379-402.

- The category is centred around one or more prototypes: one or more central uses of the lexical items that exhibit a significant number of characteristic attributes and count as ‘best’ examples of the use of the item; more to the periphery are uses that exhibit fewer of the characteristic attributes. (For instance, it may well turn out that ‘moral’ uses of *νώφρων* such as ‘in control of one’s desires’ or ‘faithful’ exhibit *more* of the characteristic attributes, and are *more* central uses of the word than *νώφρων* in the sense of ‘sane’.)

- Since each group of uses consists of a (high) number of individual expressions in which the terms are used in roughly similar way, each use is a sub-category in itself and is likely to exhibit the phenomena of prototypicality and borderline cases. As we have seen, within the sub-category of loyal women, Penelope is a typical example, and Medea probably a borderline case. Alcestis is probably atypical in that she exhibits ‘extreme values’ for the required attributes.

#### 6. *Requirements for a Semantic Description of νόφρων and Cognates*

On the basis of the theory of categorisation discussed above, we can now define the most important requirements that a semantic description of the lexical items *νώφρων*, *νωφροσύνη* and *νωφρονεῖν* would have to meet.

(1) The description should be able to accommodate, without embarrassment, a large number of uses, always giving precedence to the peculiarities of particular uses as they occur, and resisting any tendency to reduce their number beforehand by abstracting generalisations from them. I regard polysemy as the normal case even in lexical items of limited complexity, let alone in the case of abstract value terms. A concept does not exist *independently* of the cognitive perception of the world outside, and shares its complexity with the perceived reality.

Above (section 3), it has been suggested that a translation like ‘self-controlled’ may well reflect an abstraction from at least four different particular senses, and that it is misleading to substitute the abstraction for the particulars without paying attention to what is lost in the process.

A very clear example of what happens in this type of abstraction is provided by the discussion of Laches' definition of *ἀνδρεία* in the dialogue of that name. Laches first gives the prototypical example of the hoplite, whose bravery can be analysed as (i) resisting (ii) dangerous enemies (iii) by fighting (iv) without fleeing from his post (190E5-6).<sup>37</sup> In reply, Socrates produces many very different examples of *ἀνδρεία*: he first cites fighting techniques that may include temporary retreat — such as fighting from horseback — so that condition (iv) no longer applies (191A-C). His next examples include dangerous and scary situations such as storms at sea, poverty, illness and politics (191D3-6), where resistance no longer even takes the form of fighting (iii); and finally he includes *ἀνδρεία* against pleasures and desires (touching on the one area where *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* would seem to overlap), where resistance is not even against things that are really dangerous or scary (191D6-E2), except perhaps in a metaphorical way. When asked what all these have in common, Laches duly provides the answer *καρτερία* ('resistance' or 'endurance', 192B9-C1). This is indeed the only attribute that all these examples have in common, but misses three important characteristics of the 'good example' of *ἀνδρεία* provided by Laches at the start. (It will also turn out to be too inclusive: as the continuation of the discussion shows, not every instance of *καρτερία* qualifies as *ἀνδρεία*.)

Reduction of four or more senses of *σωφροσύνη* to the more general sense of 'control of desires' would seem to constitute a similar type of reduction through abstraction, though this is not to preclude the possibility that 'control of desires' would be a fairly adequate description for one of these senses, the variety of *σωφροσύνη* as 'self-control' in adult males. If so, this possibly explains why this definition is readily accepted by Socrates' male interlocutors in *Gorgias* and *Republic*.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> For an analysis of Laches' definition in terms of prototype theory, see Sluiter & Rosen (2003), 5-8.

<sup>38</sup> I use the term 'self-control' in the limited sense of 'control of desires'; in modern usage it covers, of course, an astounding variety of uses. Klausner (1965), 15 lists four classes of objects of control: (i) performance (including posturing, sphincter and breath control and task performance); (ii) drive (diet



(2) The description should take into account relevant similarities between various uses. The search is not necessarily for one attribute that is shared by *all* uses of the words, though it is always conceivable that such an attribute can indeed be found. In the example from *Laches* above, ‘resistance’ or ‘endurance’ was an attribute shared by *all* given instances of ‘courage’. From that example it is clear that identifying such an attribute — however useful for one’s understanding of the inner structure of a network of related meanings — is unlikely to tell us very much about the characteristics of most particular uses. In the case of *σωφροσύνη*, it may well turn out that some attribute like ‘having a mind that functions properly’ is shared by all uses of the word, but this attribute is likely to be highly descriptive of only one use of the words (the ‘sanity’ or ‘soundness of mind’ that was restored to Cambyses in Hdt.) but highly under-descriptive of many others.

Normally, however, many attributes will be shared by some uses but not by others: the concept of ‘family resemblance’ as introduced by Wittgenstein (see section 5 above) here provides a useful tool of description. Among the examples of *andreia* from *Laches*, ‘remaining at one’s post’ was very important to the hoplite’s courage as well as, probably, to that of the helmsman of a ship. But it is of course totally irrelevant to ‘fighting’ poverty or disease, or indeed to most other instances.

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and sex control); (iii) intellect (intellectual acumen under stress) and (iv) control of affects. Of these, classical *σωφροσύνη* typically includes control of sexual drives, and also control of affects such as anger and fear, but probably less typically so: the ever-systematic Aristotle (*EN* 1103b19), for instance, contrasts *σώφρονες* and *πρᾶοι* to *ἀκόλαστοι* and *ὀργίλοι*, qualifying the first members of these pairs as *περὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας* and the second as *περὶ τὰς ὀργάς*. (Incidentally, the treatment of these types of affect in classical literature show strong stereotype effects. With men showing fear — Eteocles in *Septem*, for instance — or women showing anger — Sophocles’ *Electra* — there is often an uncomfortable sense that they are somehow transgressing the boundaries of their gender roles.)

Classical *σωφροσύνη* has little to do, in popular usage, with control of performance or intellect, nor with control of health and addictions, so important to modern understandings of self-control (see Stearns (1999) 253-320). Still, it can, perhaps, be argued that Plato’s interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* as *τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν*, is an early attempt to define *σωφροσύνη* as a type of control of performance.

Above, little has yet been said about how to account for similarities (family resemblance) between various uses of a word. For that, I refer to number (2) in section 7 below, on Langacker's abstract schema.

(3) Furthermore, the description should allow for the possibility that the category as a whole and its sub-categories within the network have no clear boundaries and allow for borderline cases. Some individual instances will be clear examples of a particular use, others will be highly peripheral. An example of peripheral use is Chremes in *Ecclesiastusae*, who claims *σωφροσύνη* on account of his obedience to the law that prescribes the abolition of private property (Ar. *Ec.* 767); here, the law to which he conforms is so patently absurd, that his obedience turns him into a very peculiar example of a law-abiding citizen, one that is likely to be regarded as an incurable fool rather than as a man who is truly *σωφρων*.

And whereas some individual instances will be highly untypical examples of the group of uses, others may well activate more than one use at a time. A clear example is the lament (E. *Tr.* 645) in which Andromache claims that she used to do all the things that are *σώφρονα* for a woman to do: here the context makes it clear that the word covers female *σωφροσύνη* in both its typical senses: fidelity and obedience.

(4) Finally, to complement the phenomenon of the borderline cases, the description should take into account gradations of membership, both between the various groups of uses within the category of the lexical item as a whole, as well as between individual instances of each type of use. To draw on our example from *Laches* once again, the hoplite fighting the enemy is probably a very typical general example of courage, and the man 'fighting' his desires is probably a rather less typical one. These effects are also discernible among individual manifestations of a single type: for instance, Laches may well be a better example of the martial variety of courage than Nicias. In the case of *σωφροσύνη* too, there are some typical types of *σωφροσύνη*, and mythological or real life persons who are very good examples of the quality at hand. Thus, for women, marital loyalty will probably be the central sense of *σωφροσύνη*, and Penelope will be its most famous embodiment. Similarly, Charmides' prominence in

the dialogue of that name is a pointer that he is a very good example of a *κόφρων* boy; the introduction to the dialogue makes this clear. And one of the functions of the dialogue as a whole would seem to be to suggest that Socrates is in fact an even better (though at first sight atypical) example than either Charmides or Critias, though contemporary readers may have needed some help to recognise the typical *κόφρων* in *him*.

These prototypical uses also on occasion give rise to stereotype effects, when it is supposed that *all* members of a certain social group share, or lack, as the case may be, the typical attributes. A clear example of this is found in the *agôn* of Aristophanes' *Clouds*, where it is suggested by the 'Stronger Argument' that in the old days *all* boys were trained to be orderly, obedient and liable to feel shame. Similar stereotype effects occur when it is supposed that *καφροσύνη* is the distinguishing characteristic of the old, or when it is feared that women are by nature more inclined to infidelity than to *καφροσύνη*.

### 7. Theoretical Apparatus for Addressing these Requirements

As I tried to show in section 5, modern cognitive linguistics offer tools for meeting all of these requirements. These tools will be described at somewhat greater length here.

(1) The claim of pervasive *polysemy* translates into the assumption that the meaning of a lexical item can be described as a network of related uses. Ever since Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (cf. section 5 above), cognitive linguistics have worked on the basis of the assumption that linguistic categories, both on the level of the lexicon (single lexemes, clusters of semantically related expressions) and on the level of grammatical categories, are typically complex: a category 'is not defined by any single unit, but comprises a constellation of units that may be quite diverse despite an overall family resemblance'.<sup>39</sup> These diverse units (in our case, the various 'senses' of lexical items)

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<sup>39</sup> Langacker (1991) 2. On categorisation, see also, among many others Lakoff (1987) and Lucy (1992).

form a 'network' whose sub-units (conceptualised as 'vertices' or 'nodes') are 'semantic, phonological or symbolic units of any kind or size. Usually clustered around a prototype, these units are linked by categorising relationships of elaboration and extension, each unit and each relationship having some degree of cognitive salience'.<sup>40</sup>

In the description of lexical items, this means that precedence is given to the diversity of senses of a word as they occur, without the need *a priori* to reduce this plurality of uses to a single, or minimally complex 'lexical meaning', as in classical semantic theory.

(2) In accounting for family resemblance, a useful tool is offered by Langacker's *abstract schema*. The ability to account for similarity between related uses was always one of the strong points of the classical theory of classification. Langacker's schema is in fact a means to accommodate these successes with the gain of being more able to account for *differences* between uses.

In accounting for the inner structure of the semantic network, one tries to identify common attributes that any individual uses may have in common. This procedure of abstracting similarities from a plurality of foreground phenomena is what Langacker calls the construction of a schema.<sup>41</sup> What he means by this becomes clear from Langacker's account of how a language user may acquire the concept 'TREE'. Suppose a language learner learns the meaning of tree from large, leafed examples such as oaks and elms. On the basis of the similarities between these trees, he will form a schematic representation of what trees have in common. This schema, TREE<sup>1</sup> will now, according to Langacker, be the new prototype of a tree. Confrontation with a

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<sup>40</sup> Langacker (1991), *ibidem*.

<sup>41</sup> Langacker (1987) 371. A prototype is a typical instance of a category, and other elements are assimilated to the category on the basis of their perceived resemblance to the prototype; there are degrees of membership based on degrees of similarity. A schema, by contrast, is an abstract characterisation that is fully compatible with all the members of the category it defines (so membership is not a matter of degree); it is an integrated structure that embodies the commonality of its members, which are conceptions of greater specificity and detail that elaborate the schema in contrasting ways.

pine tree will then lead to the formation of a schema TREE<sup>2</sup> that represents what pines and TREE<sup>1</sup> have in common. Similarly, after a visit to warmer regions, the incorporation of palm trees into the concept of trees will lead to an even more inclusive schema TREE<sup>3</sup>, and so one may ultimately arrive at a schema TREE<sup>n</sup> that includes all the trees one knows.

On the level of lexical semantics, one will note, for instance, that *κύφρων* is used many times of women who are loyal to their husbands, and can be described as 'faithful'. This will then be a first schema for a group of uses of the adjective, and provide us with a prototypical use of *κύφρων* that normally requires no further detailed surface investigation. (They are the oaks among our trees, say.) When confronted with a very different group of uses (say *κύφρων* as used of self-controlled men) we can develop a second, more abstract schema that defines the similarities between the two uses. Ultimately, we may thus arrive at a schematic representation of what many, maybe even most, or all, uses of the word have in common.

This then is a way to account for a large variety of uses, without breaking up the indivisible, or losing sight of the 'concept' as a whole.

On the highest level of abstraction, the schema *κύφρων*<sup>n</sup> closely resembles what classical theory would conceive of as the (or a) context-independent 'lexical meaning' of a word. Here one regains, so to speak, what was the main advantage of the classical concept of the abstract conception of the lexical meaning: its potential to explain what different uses of a term have in common, and why one term can be meaningfully applied to various entities or states of affairs. For Langacker, however, the priority remains with the surface phenomenon, and the schema very much remains a secondary phenomenon: a useful tool for analysis, but insufficient for the description of a concept at the level of its surface manifestations.

(3) By means of the network theory, one can easily accommodate borderline cases of category membership, or instances that belong to more than one group of uses. Here, two or more nodes of the network are activated by the context at the same time. Thus, after the stories connected with Cambyzes' madness, Herodotus' public will draw at least *two* units of information

from the verb ἐσωφρόνῃς: (i) the king is now sane, and (ii) he will presumably change his brutal ways.

(4) Otherwise, degrees of membership within one category can be described by means of the notion of *prototypicality*. Prototypicality<sup>42</sup> is a vital organisational principle of the structure of a semantic network. Clusters of uses of a word centre around prototypical uses, and individual instances will be closer to, or further removed from, the prototype. (Thus, if ‘abiding the law’ is a typical attribute of σωφροσύνη in one sense, Chremes’ handing over his property in *Ec.* is an atypical example of this law-abiding conduct.) Prototypical examples do not only concern characteristic lines of behaviour (good examples of how one behaves when σώφρων) but frequently there is also a number of people or mythological figures who characteristically embody the typical ways of behaviour. Thus, Penelope’s waiting for Odysseus’ return is a very salient example of fidelity in women, and Penelope becomes one of the paragons of (female) σωφροσύνη (e.g. *E. Tr.* 422).

But prototype effects are also at work *between* various groups of senses. Some senses are more ‘salient’ (more easily activated) than others; they tend to jump to mind immediately, whereas others may come up only on reflection. This phenomenon can be observed particularly clearly in discussions of σωφροσύνη in Plato. In continuous discourse, the context usually activates the required sense (Cambyses’ madness triggering the right interpretation of ἐσωφρόνῃς in *Hdt.* 3.64.5). But when Socrates asks ‘what is σωφροσύνη?’, strictly speaking there is no preceding context, and then it is no surprise to see Charmides coming up with what for him as a boy must indeed be a very salient use of the word. Here Charmides activates, so to speak, what is probably the prototypical sense of σωφροσύνη in the context of his own life. Similarly, the discussion of the virtue between adult males in *Gorgias* and *Republic* starts with another presumably salient sense of the word, ‘control of desires’. These, then, are contexts that tell us something about the relative salience of individual groups

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<sup>42</sup> Apart from the works by Rosch noted above, see also Lakoff (1987) 39ff, Kleiber (1990).

of uses, and they provide us with a means to establish prototype effects even in the absence of living native speakers of ancient Greek.

A specific problem connected with prototypes is, indeed, that it is not always clear how prototypes arise in the mind of the language user, and, even more pertinently to our purposes, how they can be retrospectively detected by the student of language. Rosch considers a number of possible answers to this category.<sup>43</sup>

Some prototype effects seem to have a physiological basis. An example of this is the prototypicality of focal colours, for which there seems to be a clear neurological basis.<sup>44</sup> In our case, such a physiological basis is obviously irrelevant.

In other cases, some members of a category may have prototype status because they are more frequently encountered. But Rosch (*op. cit.*) warns that frequency of perception may well be a *symptom* of prototypicality rather than its cause. Even if mirrors and clocks are less typical pieces of furniture than tables and chairs, that does not necessarily mean that we encounter them less often. Rosch calls this the 'good old days' effect, by which people remember (some parts of) their past as invariably 'good', even if in reality it has been rather more mixed.<sup>45</sup> The consequence for our study is that it does not make much sense to try to start counting occurrences of individual senses in order to establish the prototypicality of a use on the basis of its frequency (especially when we often would not be sure whether we were measuring characteristics of the lexical items themselves, or genre characteristics of the texts in our data base.)

Another possibility that has been suggested is the order of learning. As we have seen above, the order of learning played a role in Langacker's description of concept formation, and in his account of prototypes and schema's. In the case of a dead language, however, we have no means to see in which order various

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<sup>43</sup> Rosch (1975b) 177-206.

<sup>44</sup> See also Heider (1971) 447-55.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Taylor (1995) 53n.6, who draws attention to the fact that children almost invariably draw green grass and blue skies, even in regions where for large parts of the year the grass is brown, and the sky grey.

uses of language items are acquired; therefore, this is no possible tool.

A fourth option that has been suggested, is that mean values of variable attributes are more typical than extreme ones. A gull, with its medium size may well be a more ‘normal’ bird than an eagle. Mean values may play some role in the distinction between the not-so-very *νώφρων* Medea, the fully *νώφρων* Penelope and the unusually *νώφρων* Alcestis.

And finally, it has been suggested that certain attributes may be particularly salient, because they are especially important in a society. This seems the most promising approach for our value terms.

Therefore, I will work on the assumption that a use of a word may well be prototypical if it is easily activated, without a great deal of contextual preparations (consider the first answers to the ‘what is *x*?’-questions in Socratic dialogues, or the designation of Penelope as a *νώφρων* woman tout court in *E. Tr.* 422). A double-check for my findings would be that supposedly prototypical uses should be likely to reflect current and relevant norms of everyday life, rather than the constructs of high literature or philosophical discourse. For ordinary Athenian citizens, say, *ωφροσύνη* in the use of ‘control of desires’ will probably more relevant to their daily lives than the special type of *ωφροσύνη* (‘submission’) demanded from Ajax by Athena and the Atreids in Sophocles’ play. If I found reason to assume that the former represents a prototypical use of *νώφρων*, I would happily do so; in the second case, I would hesitate rather longer.

### 8. *The Disposition of this Study: Theory Versus Practice*

Before turning to the main body of this study, it may be good to summarise which questions have to be addressed in the course of the investigation, and to indicate briefly how I will proceed in addressing them.

(1) As stated above, the peculiarities of the use of *νώφρων* and cognates in Plato raise the question how exactly the terms are traditionally used in non-philosophical texts. In order to answer this first question, the use of *νώφρων* and cognates in non-



philosophical Greek texts up to Plato's time will be investigated, resulting in a full synchronic description of the use of the words in the fourth century BC. It has been argued above (section 4) that the use of the so-called network model from cognitive linguistics developed by Langacker provides the most suitable tool of analysis of our data. The particular strength of this model is that, while it accommodates all the advantages of the classical semantic model, it is also able to deal with some residual problems of the classical models (as argued above in sections 4-7).

(2) After that, this study will turn to Plato, and will try to establish how exactly Plato's conception of *ωφροσύνη* relates to the traditional uses of the terms.

In the central chapters (2-8) of this study, I will investigate the material from the pre-Platonic texts. In these chapters, I will mainly be concerned with detailed analyses of individual text passages, and with identifying various groups of uses within the network. After the *theoretical* apparatus sketched above, my *method* of approaching the text will perhaps strike the reader as reassuringly, or — as the case may be — depressingly traditional: it will involve such familiar procedures as close reading and analysis of relevant text passages, listing and analysing of related and opposed terms, and seeing how and by what means the concept of *ωφροσύνη* is activated in contexts where the terms are not explicitly used.

The reason for this is that in these chapters, I am basically concerned with gathering and inspecting the material. I have deliberately delayed the attempt to synthesise my data in a full semantic description. (Any reader who is interested only in that can happily jump to chapter 9. Conversely, any reader interested in a specific author can either decide not to burden himself with theoretical issues and read only the relevant chapter, or in addition consult the relevant table for the use of the term in specific genres and authors in chapter 9.) After that, my theoretical model comes into full play in my attempt, in chapter 9, to give an integrated semantic description of the concept of *ωφροσύνη* as a whole. The test for my theoretical framework will be to see if it succeeds in integrating the data gathered in the central chapters into a description of some explanatory power.

In the central chapters (2-8), I have chosen to present the material genre by genre, and even, in the case of the tragedians, author by author, in a roughly chronological order.

This is not primarily in order to trace diachronic developments of the concept under investigation. It is of course quite true that from time to time, we will meet uses that are 'new' in the sense that we have not been confronted with them in previous chapters. But, especially for the earlier ages, our data are scattered, and it may not always be possible to decide whether we are dealing with the vagaries of our tradition, issues of genre, or with genuine diachronic developments. This is a question that does not fall within the scope of the present study.

My reasons for a quasi-chronological presentation of the material are, rather, one of convenience and one of content. First, this presentation seems convenient for readers who wish to consult the book for reference to a specific author. More importantly, however, we are confronted with considerable differences between genres and authors. The texts differ widely in subject matter and in their styles of presentation, and this is reflected in the fact that the use of our terms varies from genre to genre. Thus, each chapter brings its own particular contribution, so to speak, to the synopsis of uses available to Plato.

Chapter 2 will deal with the Homeric poems. The most significant use of *αῶφρων* there is connected with younger males vis-à-vis their elders, notably Telemachus, who in a sense offers the first literary model for the *αῶφρων* youth in the manner of Plato's Charmides. This chapter will also investigate some related terms and expressions from epic diction. This is because epic diction uses other words for some of the typical uses of *αῶφρων* found elsewhere.

The next chapter turns to archaic poetry. Here we meet the *σωφροσύνη* of the male citizen in the archaic city-state. *σωφροσύνη* is here most typically related to conduct that avoids injustice to others (and so, it is closely related to *δικαιοσύνη*), and specifically with the orderly civic conduct that avoids internal conflicts. These are the first manifestations of *σωφροσύνη* as a political virtue, and on that account obviously relevant to Plato's treatment of the concept.

In Aeschylus (chapter 4) we are confronted with the *ωφροσύνη* of inferiors dealing with higher authorities, both that of mortals versus the gods (*P.*, *Th.*, *Ag.*) and of subjects vis-à-vis their superiors (*Ag.*, *PV*). On account of its subject matter, *Supplices* offers a lot of information on the *ωφροσύνη* of unmarried girls.

In Sophocles (chapter 5), the main text is *Ajax*. Issues of authority are important here again: the play exploits the tensions that can arise between the heroic temperament of the strong individual, and the restraint demanded by the community. For Plato, one of the issues of *his* conception of virtue seems to have been the troublesome reconciliation of *ἀνδρεία* and *ωφροσύνη*, and in *Ajax* we observe many of the tensions that give rise to such a concern in the concentrated context of a dramatic setting.

Euripides (chapter 6) seems typically concerned with the psychology of rather less-than-heroic mortals, and in his works we see protagonists struggling with *ἔρως* and various other affects. Some of his plays thus offer a dramatisation of *ωφροσύνη* as control of the desires. Euripides is of course also notable for his female protagonists, thus providing us with the richest source of information on female *ωφροσύνη*. Besides, Euripides is a rich source on persuasive and manipulative uses of the terms with which we concern ourselves. In the plays, we observe how characters use moral terminology to suit their own purposes, offering examples of ‘transvaluation’ on a smaller scale, where some of Socrates’ interlocutors tend to do the same on a rather larger scale.

With the historians (chapter 7), we return to a world entirely dominated by male protagonists. Herodotus contrasts the madness of Cambyses and the rashness of Xerxes with the *ωφροσύνη* of some counsellor figures, and thus provides some literary pendants to Callicles’ and Thrasymachus’ strong men-without-restraint. Thucydides by contrast focuses on the Greek *πόλις* as a collective. He is very informative on the use of *ωφροσύνη* as a political value term, and especially as a slogan of the Spartans and the elitist pro-Spartan Athenians. The use of evaluative terminology in Thucydides is largely confined to the speeches, and — like Euripides — the *Histories* are a rich source on persuasive

uses of our terms, and on the issues confronting Plato in his attempt to construct a theory of political ἀρετή.

Chapter 8 finally deals with two genres that show rather more of what *σωφροσύνη* means to the ordinary ‘decent’ citizen: Aristophanic comedy and the speeches of the orators. Here we meet the *σώφρων πολίτης*, who refrains from injustice and violence, avoids *πράγματα*, and is keen to be considered by his fellow-citizens as generally ‘decent’. The orators here offer comparatively straightforward uses of our terms that are likely to be accepted by the majority of their audience (though of course these familiar notions are often employed for persuasive effect), whereas Aristophanes is naturally prone to comic exaggeration and inversion. Aristophanes’ *Clouds* is important for its comic caricature of traditional education, offering a ludicrous counterpart to the serious portrayal of Charmides. And the orators are important for featuring some fourth-century political uses of *σωφροσύνη* that are markedly different from those from before the turn of the century.

After this, I will take stock of my findings, and provide — as an answer to my first research question, about the semantics of *σώφρων* and cognates — a synchronic description, in terms of the semantic model advocated above, of the uses of *σώφρων* and cognates available to Plato (Chapter 9). This chapter discusses the various uses encountered in our text corpora, and places them in a network, centring around what I take to be *the* prototypical use of the word, the use to commend control of desire in adult males.

When these preliminary conclusions have been reached, we can turn to Plato (chapter 10). In that chapter, I will argue that Plato uses traditional notions of *σωφροσύνη* in two rather different ways. On the one hand, a dialogue as *Gorgias* exploits the polysemy of the term for persuasive goals. In such texts, the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* is used to establish links between such seemingly incompatible qualities as *δικαιοσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία*. On the other hand, in *Charmides* the goal seems to be one of *reduction*: in the dialogue, a considerable number of traditional uses of *σωφροσύνη* are discussed and dismissed. This procedure seems to pave the way for Plato’s attempt to get to the ‘core’ of the matter. At the final stage of this process of reduction, we will see that

the definition of *σωφροσύνη* in *Republic* ultimately rests on only two very central uses of our terms, and these include the prototypical use of ‘control of desire’.

## CHAPTER TWO

### HOMER

#### 1. *Introduction*

This chapter will deal with the theme of *καφροσύνη* and some related expressions in the Homeric poems. Its section 2 will discuss the use of *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη* in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The terms are used only four times in Homer, three times of younger males dealing with men of superior status (Apollo versus Poseidon, Telemachus both versus Menelaus and with an eye on Odysseus' plans for revenge) and once of the servant woman Eurycleia vis-à-vis her mistress Penelope. In two out of the four instances, the concept of *αἰδώς* is directly present in, or unmistakably relevant to, the context, and section 3 will deal briefly with *αἰδώς* in order to establish in which types of context *καφροσύνη* and *αἰδώς* can be associated, and how the terms differ.

If instances of *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη* are exceedingly rare in the Homeric poems, this is not to be taken to mean that the *behaviour* associated elsewhere with *καφροσύνη* is in any sense undervalued, and the remaining two sections of this chapter will deal briefly with some aspects of the description of the relevant types of behaviour.

First, the *Iliad*, especially, is full of heroic characters who momentarily lose their good sense and indulge in inexplicably irresponsible behaviour, often with disastrous consequences for both themselves and their subordinates. Epic diction describes such incidents as a momentary 'loss of *φρένες*', and these situations provide a kind of 'negative' scenario, and show what happens if mental checks are lost temporarily. They will be briefly considered in section 4.

Even more importantly perhaps (section 5), the *Odyssey* features three protagonists, Odysseus, Penelope and Telemachus,

who are regarded by later authors as models of *σωφροσύνη*.<sup>1</sup> Of the three, only Telemachus in his role of the 'decent young man' and 'good son' is credited with *σωφροσύνη* in the Homeric poem, but this seems due to the richness of the epic vocabulary of the *Odyssey*. Each of the protagonists in fact has his or her own specific set of epithets, and through their use in quite specific contexts in the epics, these epithets invoke specific associations relevant to the character at hand. Thus, the theme of the loyalty of Penelope is invoked not by the adjective *καόφρων*, as one might expect on the basis of later Greek usage, but rather by the adjectives *περίφρων* and *ἐχέφρων*. Similarly, Telemachus in his role of the 'responsible young man' rather than 'the obedient son' is called *πεπνυμένος* rather than *καόφρων*. Odysseus is notable for his control of anger in some particularly insulting situations, but elsewhere, he is more typically wily and enduring, and so perhaps a less typically *σώφρων* figure. He has his own epithets that invoke these characteristic qualities.

## 2. *σωφροσύνη* and the Rationalisation of Restraint in Homer

In the Homeric poems, the adjective *καόφρων* and the noun *σωφροσύνη* are each used twice (*καόφρων* *Il.* 21.462, *Od.* 4.158; *σωφροσύνη* *Od.* 23.13, 23.30). In view of this small number of occurrences, the range of uses we find here is inevitably limited as compared to what one finds in later authors, yet the four uses are by no means uniform, and it appears impossible even here to identify a single 'original' sense of the words.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Penelope is probably *the* paragon of the *σώφρων* woman: see E. *Tr.* 422, Ar. *Th.* 547, AP. 9.166.4. Odysseus' renown for *σωφροσύνη*, on the other hand, rests for a large part on Sophocles' *Ajax*, where Odysseus is generally regarded as a 'foil' to the eponymous hero (and most other characters in the play) in that he is the only one able to heed Athena's summons to *σωφροσύνη* (*Aj.* 132), cf. chapter 5 below. For Odysseus, see otherwise X. *Mem.* 1.3.7 (abstinence), Pl. *Phd.* 94d (endurance). Elsewhere, Odysseus' talent for speech and deceit is both admired and criticised (for the latter see S. *Phil.* passim and Aristotle's comments on this play, *EN* 1146a21, 1150b20); he is also unequivocally blamed for the death of Palamedes (X. *Ap.* 26).

<sup>2</sup> North (1966), 3, 4, suggests that *Od.* 23.13 and 23.30 are "closest to [the] original significance", and that *Il.* 21.462 and *Od.* 4.158 are "more suggestive of

Three of the four relevant passages, *Il.* 21.462, *Od.* 4.158 and *Od.* 23.30, are connected in the sense that in all of them *σωφροσύνη* is used to commend some kind of well-considered restraint on part of a younger man (Apollo, Telemachus) out of deference to a 'father' figure of higher status (Poseidon, Menelaus, Odysseus). Yet the three instances differ considerably in tone. In *Od.* 4.158, the reticence of Telemachus before Menelaus is commended by Pisistratus in a relatively straightforward manner in terms of modesty and respect for a grand old man. In *Od.* 23.30, on the other hand, Telemachus keeps silent again, this time about his father's return and in obedience to his father's explicit instructions, but here the *σωφροσύνη* ascribed to him is presented by Eurycleia to Penelope as a very 'adult' kind of prudence for the sake of the master plan of vengeance. Similarly, though Apollo in *Il.* 21.472 clearly shrinks from the idea of accepting his uncle's challenge to a fight, his reply ('You would not call me *καόφρων* if I did') downplays his shyness and emphasises that it would not make sense for him to say yes. Thus, in these last two passages, two uses of *καόφρων* are activated at the same time: in both passages, *σωφροσύνη* implies both careful consideration of what is at stake for the agent himself (prudential 'self-interest') and respect for others; no clear-cut distinction can here be made between these two types of motivation.

*Od.* 23.13 stands somewhat apart in that the noun is used there simply to indicate a 'sensible state of mind' without focusing on the restraint characteristic of such a state. Yet here as well, the context centres on the theme of respect for persons of superior status: Penelope rebukes the servant woman Eurycleia for waking her up, but in mitigation of her rebuke states that her servant's uncharacteristically inconsiderate behaviour must be due to the gods, who can suddenly and completely change a person's state of mind.

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later semantic developments". She generally assumes that the ostensibly 'intellectual' uses of the word precede the more unequivocally 'moral' ones. The Homeric data do not confirm this assumption: as we shall see, even in those Homeric passages where the terms are used in a primarily 'prudential' sense (*Il.* 21.462, *Od.* 23.30), moral considerations are relevant to the context as well.



Relatively speaking, the most straightforward case is *Od.* 4.158. Telemachus has been received by Menelaus in Sparta. His host guesses the young man's identity, and Helen openly notes the resemblance to Odysseus. Nestor's son Pisistratus explains Telemachus' hesitation to speak up and make himself known:

Ατρείδη Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, ὄρχαμε λαῶν,  
κείνου μὲν τοι ὄδ' υἱὸς ἐτήτυμον, ὡς ἀγορεύεις·  
ἀλλὰ καόφρων ἐστί, νεμεσσᾶται δ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ  
ὦδ' ἐλθὼν τὸ πρῶτον ἐπεσβολίας ἀναφαίνειν  
ἅντα κέθεν, τοῦ νῶϊ θεοῦ ὡς τερπόμεθ' αὐδῇ."  
(*Od.* 4.156-160)

Son of Atreus, Menelaus protected by Zeus, lord of hosts, this is really a son of his, just as you say. But he is *καόφρων*, and heartily disapproves, having only just arrived for the first time, of exhibiting rash speech in front of you, in whose voice we take delight as in that of a god.

Telemachus refrains from speaking up, even when Odysseus is mentioned by both Menelaus and Helen (107, 143). Pisistratus explains that there is a good reason for the young man's remarkable reticence: it is due to the fact that he has the 'good sense' to refrain from rash speech in front of a host of considerably higher status, 'for he considers it wrong' (*νεμεσσᾶται*, 158<sup>3</sup>) for a newly arrived young guest to speak rashly in front of a grand old, even god-like, man such as Menelaus. Pisistratus thus suggests that Telemachus' reticence is well-considered and suits his position.

<sup>3</sup> *νέμεσις* and *νεμεσάω/νεμεσιζομαι* typically point to 'disapproval', 'indignation' or 'anger' at transgressions of social norms by others (Hesych. ν 287 *νεμεσῶ: μέμφομαι*). See, for instance, *Il.* 3.156-7 οὐ νέμεσις Τρῶας καὶ εὐκνήμιδας Ἀχαιοὺς | τοιγίδ' ἀμφὶ γυναικὶ πολὺν χρόνον ἄλγεα πάσχειν, 'it's no cause for disapproval (i.e. quite understandable) that the Trojans and the Achaei suffer pains on behalf of such a woman for a very long time.'; *Od.* 1.128 *νεμεσσήσαιτό κε νῆρ | αἵσχεα πόλλ' ὀρώων, ὅς τις πινυτός γε μετέλθοι*, 'A man would feel indignation at the sight of so many disgraces [the suitors feasting], if a sensible man came along.' But one can also experience *νέμεσις* at the thought of doing wrong oneself: see, for instance, the use of the *adj. verbale* *νεμεσσητόν*, 'it is liable to νέμεσις (to do x)', *Il.* 3.410, 9.523, 14.336, 19.182, 24.463, *Od.* 22.59, 22.489. *νέμεσις* then becomes an inhibitory force similar *in effect* to αἰδώς. Cf. Von Erffa (1933) 30-35, Scott (1980) 13-35, Cairns (1993), 51-4.

That Telemachus' commendable quietness might well be considered over-inhibited for his age and situation, is suggested, however, by the conversation between Athene/Mentor and Telemachus at the start of book three. There, Athene tells him that he should no longer feel *αἰδώς* now, not even a little, but go and confront Nestor in order to ask after his father.<sup>4</sup> The young man's reply shows that, though he was presented from *Od.* 1.230 onwards as a *πεπνυμένος* speaker, he himself has no confidence in his own eloquence, and does indeed feel *αἰδώς* at the thought of interrogating Nestor.<sup>5</sup> So there is no doubt that Telemachus also feels *αἰδώς* here, but by attributing this to his being *καόφρων* and explicitly stating the norm that one should not speak rashly in front of a host like Menelaus, Pisistratus suggests that there is a very good reason for this feeling of inhibition.<sup>6</sup>

Telemachus is credited with *καοφροσύνη* in *Od.* 23.30 as well, and here, too, the term is used to suggest that there is a reasonable explanation for surprising reticence on his part; this time, it is his silence about his father's homecoming. Eurycleia has announced Odysseus' return to Penelope, who is angry to have been woken up, and disinclined to believe the good news. Eurycleia insists that it is really true:

οὐ τί σε λωβεύω, τέκνον φίλον, ἀλλ' ἔτυμόν τοι  
ἦλθ' Ὀδυσσεὺς καὶ οἶκον ἰκάνεται, ὥς ἀγορεύω,  
ὁ ξείνος, τὸν πάντες ἀτίμων ἐν μεγάροις.  
Τηλέμαχος δ' ἄρα μιν πάλαι ἥιδεεν ἐνδον ἔοντα,  
ἀλλὰ καοφροσύνησι νοήματα πατρὸς ἔκευθεν,  
ᾧ φρ' ἀνδρῶν τείσαιο βίην ὑπερηνορέοντων.  
(*Od.* 23.26-31)

"I do not at all mock you, my dear child. No, it is *really* true that Odysseus has come and returned to his home, as I tell you: he is the stranger, whom all men did insult in the *megaron*. Telemachus

<sup>4</sup> *Od.* 3.14 Τηλέμαχ', οὐ μέν σε χρὴ ἔτ' αἰδοῦς οὐδ' ἡβαιόν.

<sup>5</sup> 3.22-4 Μέντορ, πῶς τ' ἄρ' ἴω, πῶς τ' ἄρ' προσπτύξομαι αὐτόν; | οὐδέ τί πω μύθοισι πεπείρημαι πυκινοῖσιν | αἰδῶς δ' αὖ νέον ἄνδρα γεραίτερον ἐξερέεσθαι. 'Mentor, how shall I go to him; how shall I greet him? I am not yet experienced in well-crafted words. And besides, it is a cause for *αἰδώς* for a young man to address an older man.'

<sup>6</sup> This implies that *αἰδώς*, unlike *καοφροσύνη*, is more like a 'feeling' or 'emotion' than like a 'deliberation' in that it occurs spontaneously. See section 3 below.

seems to have known for quite some time that he was in the house, but he prudently concealed his father's plans, until he might take revenge for the forcible deeds of overbearing men.'

To corroborate her assertion that the beggar who has been mocked by all is indeed Odysseus, Eurycleia says that Telemachus seems to have known for quite some time that his father was back;<sup>7</sup> she then adds that in view of Odysseus' plans for revenge, it was quite sensible that he did not tell the good news, apparently to counter the suggestion that the boy's silence does not exactly confirm her account. Telemachus' silence is thus explained as prudent restraint for the sake of the revenge — very appropriate and responsible behaviour in view of the need to save Odysseus' *oikos*.<sup>8</sup>

But the hearer may well remember that at *Od.* 16.299-307, Odysseus has explicitly ordered his son to keep silent about his return even to Penelope (and Eurycleia may be well aware of this because at *Od.* 19.482-90, he has given her the same instruction in quite forcible terms). So the hearer is likely to take Telemachus' silence as a sign of obedience to his father's commands, and this hints at a use of the noun *καοφροσύνη* not explicitly activated in the context.

There is another passage in which the 'prudent' restraint of a younger male has a great deal to do with respect for an older

<sup>7</sup> At *Od.* 21.381-5, it is Telemachus who, in preparation of the murder of the suitors, tells Eurycleia to shut the doors of the *megaron* and pay no attention to the noises inside. Then, at *Od.* 22.395-7, immediately before the killing of the disloyal servant women, Telemachus tells her that his father wants to have a word with her.

<sup>8</sup> The — exceptional — plural *καοφροσύνησι* might simply be due to metrical considerations, but more probably it may be taken to imply that Telemachus' discretion was tested for a prolonged period and on several occasions. As we know from the context, Telemachus held his position of 'keeping quiet until/for the sake of the revenge' for two whole densely packed days of narrated time. Cf. *Il.* 1.205 *ἥις ὑπεροπλίσκει τάχ' ἄν ποτε θυμὸν ὀλέεσσι*, where it is certainly implied that Agamemnon's 'arrogance' has been evident many times before, and *ἀτασθαλίῃσιν* in *Od.* 1.7 (the almost proverbial 'stupidity' of Odysseus' crew). North (1966), 4 translates *καοφροσύνησι* as 'acts of prudence', and comments: 'The use of the substantive in the plural, almost unparalleled in later Greek, suggests that the focus is here on the behaviour characteristic of *καοφροσύνη* rather than on the mentality that produces it.' Focus on behaviour, however, is entirely common for the singular as well. Besides, 'acts of prudence' is puzzling rendition for what was in fact a remarkable suppression of action.

relative. This is the battle of the gods in the Iliad, in which Apollo declines his uncle Poseidon's challenge to a fight:

ἐννοσίγαι', οὐκ ἄν με καόφρονα μνθήχαιο  
 ἔμμεναι, εἰ δὴ κοί γε βροτῶν ἔνεκα πτολεμίζω  
 δειλῶν, οἳ φύλλοισιν εἰκότες ἄλλοτε μέν τε  
 ζαφλεγέες τελέθουσιν ἀρούρης καρπὸν ἔδοντες,  
 ἄλλοτε δὲ φθινύθουσιν ἀκήριοι. ἀλλὰ τάχιστα  
 πανώμεσθα μάχης· οἳ δ' αὐτοὶ δηριάσθων.  
 ὣς ἄρα φωνήσας πάλιν ἐτράπετ'· αἶδετο γάρ ῥα  
 πατροκασιγνήτοιο μιγήμεναι ἐν παλάμησι.  
 (Il. 21.462-9)

'Earth-shaker, you cannot maintain that I am *καόφρων*, if I really am to wage war with you on behalf of mortals, the wretched ones, who, like leaves, now flourish fiercely, feeding themselves on the fruits of the land, but then lose their lives and wither away. No, let us immediately stop this battle. Let them fight for themselves.' Thus he spoke, and turned away. For he had *αἰδώς* to engage in a battle of fists with his uncle.

Apollo motivates his refusal to accept his uncle's challenge by pointing out that it would not make sense for him to fight with his uncle (*κοί γε*) on behalf of mere mortals. His emphasis on man's mortality explains why their claims to his loyalty do not outweigh those of his uncle: it would make no sense to let these — necessarily temporary — claims prevail. The explanatory comment of the narrator in 468-9 (*αἶδετο γάρ ...*),<sup>9</sup> however, while by no means contradicting Apollo's own words, make explicit what Apollo's own words *κοί γε* seem to imply: it is not so much the good sense to avoid engaging in a senseless enterprise, but *αἰδώς* in front of an elderly relative, that inhibits his acceptance of his uncle's challenge, and triggers his subsequent sudden departure (462 *πάλιν ἐτράπετο*).<sup>10</sup> This suggests that Apollo feels that he could not possibly accept his uncle's challenge, but

<sup>9</sup> For the verb *αἰδέομαι* in combination with an infinitive expressing a line of action from which the subject is deterred, see Cairns (1993), 48-9. For *αἰδώς* in connection with inhibition amongst relatives, see especially *ibid.*, 90-2.

<sup>10</sup> De Jong (1987), 113-4, 269n.38, compares this passage to four others in which the narrator expresses a motive that is not voiced by the character itself: Il. 1.536-8, 2.3-4, 5.563-4, 15.728. Of these, our passage is the only one where the words of the narrator state the implications of the motivation given by the character itself.

comes up with a rationalisation of this feeling that allows him (as well as his uncle) to save face. Again, this inhibition of a younger male versus an older one who, except for his age, is not intrinsically of a higher status, is a somewhat ambiguous affair. Indeed, the following lines show that Apollo's behaviour is not uniformly appreciated among the gods: Artemis rebukes her brother's 'desertion' (φεύγεις, 472) and tells him never again to boast that he can compete with Poseidon (475-7).

Thus, αἰδώς and σωφροσύνη are clearly related in this passage, if in a somewhat oblique manner. If αἰδώς inhibits the 'shameful' act of fighting with an older relative, the phrase 'You will certainly not say that I am καόφρων if I did ...' offers the rationalisation that it would indeed not make sense to accept the challenge, presenting the involuntary inhibition in terms of a well-considered and purposeful rejection.<sup>11</sup> Again, a second use of καόφρων is activated in retrospect: while Apollo suggests that he is 'sensible' or 'prudent' enough not to engage in a useless enterprise, the hearer is bound to reinterpret this 'prudence' in terms of youthful reluctance to offend his uncle.

The last Homeric passage to be considered here is *Od.* 23.13, again from the passage in which Odysseus' return is announced to Penelope. Penelope is irritated to have been disturbed by Eurykleia with patently false messages:

μαῖα φίλη, μάργην σε θεοὶ θέσαν, οἳ τε δύνανται  
ἄφρονα ποιῆσαι καὶ ἐπίφρονά περ μάλ' ἔοντα,  
καί τε χαλιφρονέοντα σωφροσύνης ἐπέβησαν·  
οἳ σέ περ ἔβλαψαν· πρὶν δὲ φρένας αἰσίμη ἦσθα.  
(*Od.* 23.11-4)

My dear woman, the gods have made you raging mad, the gods who are both able to make mindless even someone who is very attentive, and bring someone whose φρένες are weak to σωφροσύνη. As for you, they have harmed you; before, you were quite right-minded.

Penelope is very angry indeed, and she rebukes the good old woman in the strongest of terms: she must be 'raging mad',

<sup>11</sup> For the emotion-like nature of αἰδώς, cf. section 4 below.

μάργην.<sup>12</sup> In mitigation of this fierce criticism, she suggests that this behaviour is so much ‘out of character’ that it can only have been caused by gods, who are able to make ‘mindless’ someone who normally is very attentive.<sup>13</sup> Besides, they also bring someone who is normally ‘weak-minded’<sup>14</sup> to *καοφροσύνη*.

The noun *καοφροσύνη*, then, is used here to describe a ‘sensible’ state of mind rather than the behaviour characteristic of it. But again there are unmistakably ‘moral’ implications in the background. Eurycleia fails in her usual obedience and loyalty to her mistress, and it seems implied that if she were *καόφρων*, she would act otherwise. Here again, then, a secondary use of

<sup>12</sup> Penelope also uses the word *μάργε* when she strongly rebukes Antinous for plotting to kill Telemachus (*Od.* 16.421). Otherwise, the adjective is used at *Od.* 18.2 to describe the insatiably raging stomach of the beggar Iros. In *Il.* 5.882, the indignant Ares uses the verb *μαργαίνειν* to describe the fighting of Diomedes, who with the help of Pallas Athene has wounded the war-god.

<sup>13</sup> *ἐπίφρονα* is not to be taken as an equivalent of *καόφρονα*. In *Od.* 5.347, it is said that Odysseus would have died in the storm before his time if Athene had not paid attention and saved him (*εἰ μὴ ἐπιφροσύνην δῶκε γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη*). Similarly, in *Od.* 19.22, Eurycleia prays that Telemachus will take on the attentiveness which is necessary for taking care of his house and belongings (*αἶ γὰρ δὴ ποτε, τέκνον, ἐπιφροσύνας ἀνέλοιο | οἶκον κήδεσθαι καὶ κτήματα πάντα φυλάσσειν*). At *Od.* 19.385, Odysseus-the-beggar praises Eurycleia for attentively commenting (*ἐπιφρονέουσ’ ἀγορεύεις*) on the resemblance between himself and Odysseus. Accordingly, the adjective is otherwise used in combination with nouns such as *βουλή* (*Od.* 3.128, 16.242) or *μήτις* (*Od.* 19.326), and may then as well be taken to mean *attentive* or *clever*. In the *LfrE*, H.W. Nordheider translates *ἐπίφρων* as *umsichtig*; *ἐπίφροσύνη* as *Umsicht* or *Geistesgegenwart*. The point of the association of the two terms here seems to be that Eurycleia’s behaviour is both inconsiderate and offensive to her mistress.

<sup>14</sup> *χαλίφρων* seems to mean *weak of φρένες* (*Schol. Q.* in *Od.* 23.13 *χαλίφρονέοντα: κεχαλασμένους καὶ παρειμένους ἔχοντα τὰς φρένας*). The adjective *χαλίφρων* twice occurs in connection with *νήπιος* to describe either the supposed ‘weak-mindedness’ of Menelaus who lingers on the isle of Pharos in apparent oblivion of his homeland (*Od.* 4. 371–2) or the ‘weak-mindedness’ of Telemachus as a little child not yet able to take care of the deserted *oikos* of his father (*Od.* 19.530). At *Od.* 16.310, Telemachus encourages his father to be prudent in dealing with the suitors, and goes on to make the apology that his warning is not the result of ‘weak-mindedness’, but rather of a concern for the best strategy, *κέρδος: ὦ πάτερ, ἧ τοι ἐμὸν θυμὸν καὶ ἔπειτά γ’, οἶω, | γνῶσκειν: οὐ μὲν γάρ τι χαλίφροσύναι γέ μ’ ἔχουσιν. | ἀλλ’ οὐ τοι τόδε κέρδος ἐγὼν ἐσσεσθαι οἶω | ἥμιν ἀμφοτέροισιν: σὲ δὲ φράζεσθαι ἄνωγα*. (*Od.* 16.309–12). All three passages imply a contrast to Odysseus, whose mind is set on returning home and taking charge of the affairs in his *oikos*. Thus, the use of *χαλίφρων* in other contexts suggest that it is not an exact antonym of *καοφροσύνη*: it points to ‘slackness’ and even ‘cowardice’ rather than ‘imprudent’ (or ‘impudent’) behaviour.

*καὸφροσύνη* is activated, and again this has to do with the reluctance to offend a social superior, but this time it is the ‘quiet obedience’ of a servant woman versus her mistress.

Thus, the noun *καὸφροσύνη* is used twice in the *Odyssey*, once to indicate soundness of mind (*Od.* 23.13), but with a hint at another use, ‘obedience’ to one’s masters, and once to indicate ‘prudence’ (*Od.* 23.30), but again, a second use is here hinted at: that of youthful obedience to an older relative. The adjective *καόφρων* is used in the Homeric poems in two ways: it is used to commend ‘prudence’ (*Il.* 21.462), and youthful ‘quietness’ (*Od.* 4.158).

So if we assume that the adjective and the substantive belong to a single lexeme, which is to say that their use invokes the same concept (and so far, I do not see anything that speaks against this assumption), we have four basic uses in all: soundness of mind, ‘prudence’ in one’s own self-interest, and quietness/obedience of young men versus adults, and of servants versus their masters. On the basis of these four passages, not much can be said yet about the inner structure of the network that connects these senses, though it may well be significant that notions relating to the two ‘other-regarding’ uses are activated in all four passages. This may well be a pointer to their greater centrality. (For a diagram that tries to visualise our results, see Fig. 3 in Chapter 9.3.)

It is noteworthy that, on the level of behaviour, *καὸφροσύνη* in all these cases invariably acts as a kind of restraint: it inhibits behaviour that either harms oneself (fighting with a god, giving away the plot of revenge) or infringes on social decorum.

### 3. *Restraint and Concern for Others: αἰδώς*

In two of the four passages considered above, *αἰδώς* was seen to be actually present in the context (*Il.* 21.468), or directly relevant to the situation (Telemachus in *Od.* 4). In Homer, indeed, restraint is frequently appraised in terms of *αἰδώς*; and the claim

that *αἰδώς* is the ‘cement of Homeric society’ is no exaggeration.<sup>15</sup>

*Αἰδώς* has been extensively treated by Cairns (1993); for this reason, there is no need to discuss the subject extensively here, but I will briefly indicate (i) in which type of context *αἰδώς* can be expected to figure as an associated term with *ωφροσύνη*, and (ii) how these terms differ essentially in meaning.

The first thing to note is that *αἰδώς* is quite exclusively concerned with the regulation of proper conduct vis-à-vis others. It has been rightly described by Cairns as connected with the ‘inclusive concept of honour as a concern for one’s own honour ... and for that of others’;<sup>16</sup> as such, *αἰδώς* typically inhibits<sup>17</sup> actions that (i) bring disgrace on the agent himself and (ii) detract from the status of the persons affected by them.<sup>18</sup> *Αἰδώς* thus charac-

<sup>15</sup> Cairns (1993), 87.

<sup>16</sup> Cairns (1993), 140.

<sup>17</sup> That *αἰδώς* typically inhibits improper action is uncontroversial, but of course it may also take the form of ‘apprehension’ when some impropriety has already been committed and then preclude the continuation of this behaviour. A typical example is the battle cry *αἰδώς*, *Ἀργεῖοι* (*Il.* 5.787, 8.228, 13.95, 15.502, cf. 16.422), which precludes the continuation of the army’s present inertia in battle (*δελία*) and spurs the combatants on. Here, then, *αἰδώς* is not just an inhibition, but a performative incentive to a better performance at the same time. *Αἰδώς* is likewise invoked as a stimulus to better fighting at *Il.* 4.402, 5.530-1, 13.122, 15.561-4, 15.661, and Hector’s *αἰδώς* for the Trojans at *Il.* 22.105 prepares the ground for his decision to stand up and confront Achilles. Outside the context of war, *αἰδώς* forbids Hephaistos to refuse Thetis’ requests and induces him to make new weapons for Achilles (*Il.* 18.425). For very similar reasons, it seems potentially misleading to say that *αἰδώς* is ‘exclusively prospective’ (Cairns (1993), 145) in Homer. While the cry *αἰδώς* will definitely raise the prospect of the charge of cowardice, especially if the appeal is reinforced by a reference to what others will say about the present performance, it also constitutes such a charge in itself: the ‘shame’ connected with *αἰδώς* will be ‘acute’ as much as ‘prospective’ in such instances. It is important here to note that in Homer, *αἰδώς* exhibits a far wider range of uses than in later Greek, cf. n. 42 below.

<sup>18</sup> The two usually go together. If, for instance, in *Il.* 1.23 most of the Greek heroes are in favour of *αἰδεῖσθαι ἱερῆα*, it is implied that refusing Chryses’ supplication is disgraceful to the Greeks just because it ignores Chryses’ status as a priest and a suppliant. Similarly, when the heralds in *Il.* 1.331 do not immediately address Achilles *αἰδομένου βασιλῆα*, it is implied that speaking out immediately is disgraceful because it ignores Achilles’ higher status. Of course, this is not always the case. When Hector in *Il.* 22.105 feels *αἰδώς* for the Trojans who will criticise him, this is primarily because he has failed to fulfil his responsibilities as a chief commander. Conversely, if a defeated warrior supplicates his en-



teristically involves two parties: a subject who experiences *αἰδώς* as well as some ‘other’ whose claims on the subject are the main source of this experience.<sup>19</sup> As such, it is invariably rooted in social interaction, and this means that *αἰδώς*, like *σωφροσύνη*, encourages behaviour that observes social decorum, but not prudence in one’s own interest. In other words, *αἰδώς* is close to two of our basic uses of *καόφρων/καοφροσύνη*, but not to the other two.

The second important thing to be noted about *αἰδώς* is that, unlike *σωφροσύνη*, it can be conceived as a more or less spontaneous occurrence; in this respect it is more like a ‘feeling’ or ‘emotion’ than a ‘rational’ response.<sup>20</sup> For this reason, *αἰδώς* can be a part of a dilemma rather than a means to its solution: at *Il.* 7.93, when Hector has challenged the Greek leaders to single combat, they do not know how to react because of two opposite feelings: ‘for they had *αἰδώς* to say no, but feared to accept’ (*αἰδέσθην μὲν ἀνήνασθαι, δείσαν δ’ ὑποδέχθαι*). The ‘spontaneous’, emotion-like character of *αἰδώς* is brought out even more clearly by the fact that it occasionally occurs in a situation where it is regarded as inappropriate, or fails to occur when it is called for. The Iliadic battle-cry *αἰδώς*, indicating that warriors should feel ‘ashamed’ at their present performance and attempt to do better

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emy and appeals to *αἰδώς*, the victor may ignore this appeal without disgrace (*Il.* 21.74, 22.124); he is then free to ignore the supplication and treat the defeated simply as an enemy (cf. *Il.* 22.419 and 24.208, where Achilles is expected not to have *αἰδώς* for the suppliant Priam).

<sup>19</sup> The distinction between the two roles seems important, for there is no suggestion in Homer that one may have *αἰδώς* for oneself in the way one has *αἰδώς* for others; indeed, Democritus’ injunction to ‘have *αἰδώς* for oneself above all’ (B 264, *ἑωυτὸν μάλιστα αἰδεῖσθαι*) is a deliberate *oxymoron*, stressing the importance of internal rather than external checks on wrong-doing (cf. Cairns, *op. cit.* 363–70). This is not to say, of course, that *αἰδώς* may not spring from one’s own consciousness as well: a good example is *Il.* 22.104–107 (*νῦν δ’ ἐπεὶ ὤλεσα λαὸν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ἐμῇσιν | αἰδέομαι Τρῶας καὶ Τρωιάδας ἐλκεσιπέπλους, | μή ποτέ τις εἴπησι κακώτερος ἄλλος ἐμείοι* | “Εκτωρ ἦφι βίῃφι πιθήσας ὤλεσε λαόν.”), where Hector’s reluctance to face the Trojans who will rightly criticise him for endangering the army is triggered by his *own* conscience on the *prospect* of facing popular disapproval. On the ‘internalisation’ of external standards, see Cairns (1993) 27–47.

<sup>20</sup> For the classification of *αἰδώς* as an emotion, see Cairns (1993), 5–14, who does *not* use the term ‘emotion’ in strict opposition to ‘rational’ cognition: ‘No approach to emotion can ignore [its] cognitive aspect’.

(see n. 17 above), is an example of the latter, as is of course the charge of *ἀναιδείη* levelled at both Agamemnon (*Il.* 1.149 etc.) and at the suitors (*Od.* 1.254 etc.); by contrast, *αἰδώς* is seen to occur at the wrong occasion when Athena tells Telemachus that he should not have *αἰδώς* for Nestor (*Od.* 3.14) in view of his need for information, or when Telemachus remarks that *αἰδώς* is ‘not good’ for a beggar in need of food (*Od.* 17.347, cf. 17.352, *αἰδώς δ’ οὐκ ἀγαθὴ κεχρημένωι ἀνδρὶ παρῆναι*,<sup>21</sup> cf. 17.578 (Penelope: *κακὸς δ’ αἰδοῖος ἀλήτης*). Similarly, though Odysseus’ need has forced him to appear naked before Nausicaa and her companions,<sup>22</sup> he still asks them to get out of the way while he washes himself, ‘for I have *αἰδώς* to appear naked among young girls’ (*Od.* 6.221-2, *αἰδέομαι γὰρ γυμνοῦσθαι | κούρησιν ἐϋπλοκάμοισι μετελθών*). A strong personal need, then, may overrule *αἰδώς* and one’s sense of decorum, but it is a testimony to the strength of the feeling of *αἰδώς* that it is not easily cast aside.

If *αἰδώς*, then, is indeed more like an emotion or a feeling than like a rational consideration in that it occurs ‘spontaneously’<sup>23</sup> and takes some effort to overcome, this characteristic clearly distinguishes it from *καοφροσύνη*, which is rather more like an ability for careful consideration, and which is, in this respect, a rather more ‘cognitive’ or ‘rational’ quality. Accordingly,

<sup>21</sup> Incidentally, this is the passage that Socrates uses to defeat Charmides’ claim that *καοφροσύνη* is ‘the same as *αἰδώς*’ (Pl. *Chrm.* 161a). This means, *pace* Heitsch (2000) 9-11, that Socrates’ refutation is not as inane as it might seem, but points to a significant distinction: whereas *αἰδώς* is a spontaneous occurrence that can arise at an inappropriate moment, *καοφροσύνη* has to do with controlled response, and does not apply to spontaneous responses occurring at the ‘wrong’ time.

<sup>22</sup> *Od.* 6.135-6, *ὥς Ὀδυσσεὺς κούρησιν ἐϋπλοκάμοισιν ἔμελλε | μίξεσθαι, γύμνος περ ἑών· χρεῖω γὰρ ἵκανε. χρεῖω* and *χρέω* can also be used to name a need that arises out of social obligations. Clear examples are *Il.* 11.409-10, *ὅς δέ κ’ ἀριστεύησι μάχῃ ἐνὶ τὸν δὲ μάλα χρεῶ | ἐστάμεναι κρατερῶς, ἥ τ’ ἔβλητ’ ἥ τ’ ἔβαλ’ ἄλλον*; 18.406-7 *τῷ με μάλα χρεῶ | πάντα Θέτι καλλιπλοκάμωι ζωιάγρια τίνειν* (Hephaestus owes Thetis a favour). But in the case of Odysseus, the need is unmistakably personal, and this is underlined by the simile, comparing him to a lion spurred by his stomach (133 *κέλεται δέ ἐ γαστήρ*) to go for prey into a built-up area.

<sup>23</sup> It is precisely for this reason that Aristotle (*EN* 1128b10-15) distinguishes *αἰδώς* from the *ἀρεταί*: according to him, it is more like a *πάθος* than an *ἔξις*, absence vs. presence of *προαίρεσις* being among the distinguishing features between these two (1106a3-4).

we have seen how, at both *Il.* 21.462 and *Od.* 4.158, the appeal to *καοφροσύνη* offers a rationalisation of a feeling of *αἰδώς* in situations where it can be doubted that restraint is, indeed, the appropriate response. If *αἰδώς* inhibits improper behaviour, the *καόφρων* will be able to decide whether *αἰδώς* should prevail in a given situation.

#### 4. *Loss or Destruction of φρένες:* *the Critique of Unaccountable Behaviour*

An interpretation of the semantics of a lexical item should never rely too heavily on the etymology of the word in question, but it seems useful to note here that the interpretation of *καοφροσύνη* and *καόφρων* at which I arrived in section 2, seems fully compatible with the sense of the words that etymology would suggest, ‘having the *φρένες* intact’ or ‘having sound *φρένες*’,<sup>24</sup> though strictly speaking only the sense ‘soundness of mind’ could have been predicted on the basis of etymology.

In order to see better what ‘having sound *φρένες*’<sup>25</sup> may be taken to suggest, it will be useful to examine briefly a number of

<sup>24</sup> The etymology from *κάος*/*κῶς* is generally accepted, see Chantraine (1978) and Frisk *s.v.*

<sup>25</sup> I take for granted here that the term *φρένες* is used both for an organ or location in the chest (commonly identified as the diaphragm or pericardium, but as the lungs by Onians (1951), 23ff., and more recently by Clarke (1999) 77; see Ireland and Steel, (1975), Sullivan (1988) 21-31 for a fuller discussion) and to describe the source, faculty and products of a wide range of mental processes, including especially (Sullivan (1988) 220-35, (1995) 36-53) ‘pondering, deliberation and reflection’, and the behaviour that is the result of such deliberation. The debate on Homeric ‘psychology’ and its terminology of mental life (relating *φρένες* to *νόος*, *θυμός*, *πράπιδες*, *κήρ*, *κραδίη* and *ἦτορ*) shows little sign of abating. Apart from Jahn (1987), who also offers extensive discussion of earlier literature, important recent contributions in this field include Sullivan (1988 and 1995, the last including references to earlier studies by the same author on p. 15n.3), Caswell (1990), Schmitt (1990), and now Clarke (1999), especially 61-126. By and large, the upshot of these recent studies has been that, while these terms tend to overlap considerably in that they are all used to refer to mental activity in a general sense (and thus are more or less interchangeable in many contexts, see Jahn (1987) for a full assessment of the metrical implications of this), some types of mental activity are typically, though not exclusively associated with specific psychic ‘entities’, notably passionate emotion and anger with *θυμός* (Caswell (1990), 49-50), deliberation with *φρένες*

contrasted expressions that interpret unexpectedly irresponsible behaviour<sup>26</sup> in terms of a (temporary) 'loss' or 'destruction' of the *φρένες*. While there is *a priori* no reason to assume that these expressions are antonyms of *καόφρων* and *κασφροσύνη* in the strict sense of the word, they still invoke the faded memory of a concept that provides us with what might be called an 'anti-scenario' to that of *σωφροσύνη*, in that they show what happens when a person does *not* have 'sound *φρένες*'. In the *Iliad* especially, it is said quite frequently that a god (or the gods) must have 'taken away', 'destroyed' or 'damaged' someone's *φρένες*.<sup>27</sup> A similar comment, but without reference to divine agency, is made when the *φρένες* are said to be 'gone', 'unstable', 'not according to what is due' or 'lacking completely'.<sup>28</sup> Or one may comment that one 'finds fault with' someone's *φρένες*, or call him 'crazed of *φρένες*'.<sup>29</sup> Of course, these expressions are highly standardised and metaphorical, and are probably to be taken as proverbial excuses for otherwise unaccountable behaviour rather

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(v. supra) and the 'products of thought' such as plans, intentions etc. with *νόος* (see Claus (1981) chapter I, and Clarke (1999), 119-26). In fact, there may well be room for yet another semantic study in this field taking full advantage of the models provided by cognitive linguistics, especially prototype theory, cf. Clarke (1999) 109 n.122.

<sup>26</sup> I say 'unexpectedly irresponsible' because this type of assessment is not applied to incorrigible 'bad guys' like Penelope's suitors, but rather to persons who might be expected to know better but occasionally fail to live up to this expectation and act 'out of character'.

<sup>27</sup> For *φρένες* affected by outside agents, cf. Sullivan (1988) 144-62. Several expressions are used. In the singular, it is said that a god has *taken away* the *φρένες* (*φρένας ἐξέλετο* or *ἐξέλετο*: *Il.* 6.234, 9.377, 18.311, 19.137), or *damaged* them (*βλάβπτε φρένας*: *Il.* 15.724; *Od.* 14.178, cf. 23.14.). In the plural, it is said that the gods have *destroyed* the *φρένες* (*Il.* 7.360 = 12.234 *ἐξ ἄρα δὴ τοι ἔπειτα θεοὶ φρένας ὤλεσαν αὐτοί*).

These expressions seem semantically equivalent; metrical considerations may well be partly responsible for the choice of one rather than the other. On the other hand, when a specific deity is said to be the perpetrator, the choice of the deity does of course seem quite significant: Thus, e.g., it is Zeus who is said to have taken away the *φρένες* of Agamemnon at the occasion of the quarrel with Achilles (*Il.* 9.377, 19.137), whereas it is Pallas Athene, the indefatigable partisan of the Achaeans, who is said to cause the Trojans' misguided decision to stay outside the city-walls. (*Il.* 18.311).

<sup>28</sup> *φρένες οἶχονθ'* (*Il.* 24.201); *οὐ(κ) ... φρένες ἔμπεδοι* (*Il.* 6.352; *Od.* 18.215); *οὐ(κ) ... φρένες ἐναίσιμοι* (*Il.* 24.40, *Od.* 18.220); *οὐ οἱ ἐνὶ φρένεσσι οὐδ' ἡβαιοί* (*Il.* 14.141, cf. *Od.* 17.454, 21.288). cf. Sullivan (1988) 186-8.

<sup>29</sup> *ωνοσάμην φρένας*, *Il.* 14.95, 17.173), *φρένας ἡλ(ε)έ* (*Il.* 15.724; *Od.* 2.243).

than as serious *explanations* of that behaviour. But while *ῥῶφρων* and cognates mostly occur in less proverbial and stereotyped surroundings, the concept of ‘sound *φρένες*’ that the terms invoke is equally metaphorical.

A famous example of a man who loses his *φρένες* is Glaucus, who changes armour with Diomedes, and receives weapons of bronze in exchange for golden ones (*Il.* 6.234-6 *ἔνθ’ αὖτε Γλαύκῳ Κρονίδης φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς, | ὃς πρὸς Τυδείδην Διομήδεα τεύχε’ ἄμειβε | χρύσεια χαλκείων, ἑκατόμβοι’ ἐννεαβοίων*, ‘Then Kronos’ son Zeus took away the *φρένες* of Glaukon, who exchanged armour with Tydeus’ son Diomedes, and gave armour of gold in exchange for bronze, a hundred cows’ worth in exchange for nine’). That is an unprofitable deal indeed, so it must be assumed that no one who is in his right mind will be willing to make it.

Equally fruitless (cf. *νηκερδέα βουλήν*), but also positively dangerous, is Automedon’s attempt to act as charioteer and fighter at the same time (*Il.* 17.470, *Αὐτόμεδον, τίς γάρ τοι θεῶν νηκερδέα βουλήν ἐν στήθεσσι νῆθηκε καὶ ἐξέλετο φρένας ἐσθλάς*; ‘Automedon, who of the gods put this unprofitable plan in your mind and took away your good *φρένες*?’). Serious risks are also at stake when Priam goes to supplicate Achilles, and Hecabe asks him ‘where have your *φρένες* gone?’ (*Il.* 24.201, *πῇ δὴ τοι φρένες οἴχονθ’*), or when Ares ignores the will of Zeus and is called ‘mad and crazed of *φρένες*’ (*Il.* 15.128, *μαινόμενε, φρένας ἡλέ*) by Athena. In such cases, individuals endanger their own safety, and their behaviour is the exact opposite of Telemachus’ prudence in keeping the secret of his father’s homecoming. Collective disregard of serious danger is exhibited by the Trojans, who ignore the warnings of Polydamas and acclaim Hector’s decision to stay outside in the plain, ‘for Athena had taken away their *φρένες*’ (*Il.* 18.311 *ἐκ γάρ φεων φρένας εἵλετο Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη*).<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> In this case, it is not one of the poem’s characters, but the narrator who makes the comment, and thus foreshadows disaster, cf. Schadewaldt (1966<sup>3</sup>), 106.

In the case of the leaders of the army, self-interest and one's own safety converge with the interests of the army as a collective, and 'bad' advice in council from the leaders is liable to be rejected in very similar terms. 'Now I wholly find fault with your *φρένες*', says Odysseus in reaction to Agamemnon's suggestion to return home (*Il.* 14.95, *νῦν δέ γε ὠνοκάμην πάγχυ φρένας*). In a similar tone of indignation, Poseidon suggests that Achilles may well take delight in the defeat of the Achaean host, as he 'completely lacks even the slightest *φρένες*' (*Il.* 14.141 *οὐδ' ἡβαιαί*). In the opposing camp, Hector is unable to accept Polydamas' warning that they should not break into the camp of the Greek fleet, and supposes that 'If you, Polydamas, really and seriously mean this, the gods themselves must then have taken away your understanding' (*Il.* 12.233-4 *εἰ δ' ἔτεδον δὴ τοῦτον ἀπὸ σπουδῆς ἀγορεύεις, | ἐξ ἄρα δὴ τοι ἔπειτα θεοὶ φρένας ὥλεσαν αὐτοί*). Obviously deluded by his temporary successes, Hector later even claims that the caution of the Trojan elders was due to Zeus' damaging their *φρένες*, for the god now spurs the Trojans to action (*Il.* 15.724f. *ἀλλ' εἰ δὴ ῥα τότε βλάπτε φρένας εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς | ἡμετέρας, νῦν αὐτὸς ἐποτρύνει καὶ ἀνώγει...*, 'but if far-sighted Zeus then damaged our *φρένες*, now he spurs us on himself and encourages us...'). Here, caution is decried as 'madness' by a man of obviously deluded judgement.

If a loss or lack of *φρένες* frequently leads to disregard for the safety of oneself and one's dependants, it also leads to disregard for social norms and standards of behaviour. A notable offender is Paris, who does not give his best in battle, and Helen exclaims that she should have been the wife of a 'better' husband, who knew about the causes for popular disapproval and public reproaches, 'for this one does not have stable *φρένες* now, nor will he ever after.' (*Il.* 6. 352ff. *τούτῳ δ' οὔτ' ἄρ νῦν φρένες ἔμπεδοι οὔτ' ἄρ' ὀπίσσω | ἔσσονται*). Similarly offensive, but this time to the gods who favour the Trojans, is Achilles' maltreatment of Hector's corpse, and Apollo claims that Achilles' *φρένες* are not 'according to what is due' and that he lacks both *ἔλεος* and *αἰδώς* (*Il.* 24.40 *ὦι οὔτ' ἄρ φρένες εἰς ἐναίσιμοι ... 24.44f. ὥς Ἀχιλλεύς ἔλεον μὲν ἀπώλεσεν, οὐδέ οἱ αἰδώς | γίγνεται*), and suggests that

‘good as he may be, we gods may well disapprove of him’ (*Il.* 24.53 *μὴ ἀγαθῶι περ ἔοντι νεμεσσηθέωμεν οἱ ἡμεῖς*).<sup>31</sup>

Personal insults are likewise offensive, and thus Hector ‘finds fault’ with Glaucus’ *φρένες* (*Il.* 17.173 *νῦν δέ σευ ὠνοκάμην πάγχυ φρένας*), when the latter outrageously (*ὑπέροπλον*, 170) hints that Hector is unable to compete with Ajax. The most blatantly offensive act in the *Iliad* is of course Agamemnon’s assault on Achilles’ *γέρας* Briseïs, and at *Il.* 9.377, after an elaborate rejection of the embassy’s offers of compensation, Achilles wishes that Agamemnon may come to grief, ‘for Zeus has taken away his *φρένες*’ (*ἐκ γάρ εὖ φρένας εἴλετο μητίετα Ζεύς*). And this assessment is echoed by Agamemnon himself in his apology: *ἀακάμην καί μευ φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς*, ‘I was blinded and my *φρένες* were taken away by Zeus’ (*Il.* 19.137).

Thus, we see that several types of unaccountably ill-judged behaviour are assessed in terms of a proverbial loss of *φρένες*, from neglect of one’s self-interest, one’s own safety and that of one’s dependants to serious transgressions against social norms.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>31</sup> The expression *ἀγαθῶι περ ἔοντι* is wrongly taken by Adkins (1960), 38, to imply that ‘the gods do not approve of Achilles’ action: but clearly the fact that he is *agathos* gives him a strong claim against gods and men to be allowed to do it.’ This view is untenable: on the one hand, Apollo clearly does *not* think that Achilles has a right to mutilate Hector’s corpse, on the other hand, as Hera’s reaction (24.56-63) shows, not all the gods disapprove of Achilles’ behaviour. See Long (1970) 128, and Dover (1983), 37-8. The phrase *ἀγαθῶι περ ἔοντι* is in fact a scalar-concessive expression, and implies that Achilles, being *ἀγαθός* as he is, is in general the person least likely to incur the *nemesis* of the gods, but now incidentally does something that should incur their disapproval. See Bakker (1988) 120-4. By prefacing his present disapproval of Achilles with a general recognition of his merits, Apollo makes his criticism more palatable for Hera, who is not likely to agree.

<sup>32</sup> Only the *Iliad* has been discussed in the above. In the *Odyssey*, expressions of this type are used less often, but the range of their application is not dissimilar. Neglect of one’s personal safety is at stake when Eumaeus tells the beggar Odysseus that some god or man must have harmed the mind of Telemachus, who has gone to Pylos in spite of the danger of the suitors’ ambush (*Od.* 14.178-82, *τὸν δέ τις ἀθανάτων βλάβη φρένας ἔνδον εἴσας | ἤε τις ἀνθρώπων· ὁ δ’ ἔβη μετὰ πατρός ἀκουήν | ἐς Πύλον ἡγαθήν· τὸν δὲ μνηστῆρες ἀγαυοὶ | οἴκαδ’ ἰόντα λοχῶσιν, ὅπως ἀπὸ φύλον ὀλῆται | νῶνυμον ἐξ Ἰθάκης Ἀρκεϊσίου ἀντιθέοιο*. ‘Some god damaged his well-built *φρένες* inside, or some human being. He went for news of his father to holy Pylos. But the proud suitors plan an assault on his return, that the race of godlike Arkeisios may perish out of Ithaka, and its name be forgotten.’). Offensive behaviour is at stake in Penelope’s irritation with Eurykleia (*Od.* 23.13ff.), when the suitor Leocritus takes offence at Men-

Though, in Homer, the scope for this type of expression is markedly wide compared with the smaller range of situations to which the terms *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη* are applied, it is interesting to note that these expressions criticise many types of adult male behaviour that later texts typically assess in terms of (a lack of) *σωφροσύνη*: as *σωφροσύνη* is a type of controlled response, the expressions that we have considered provide an excuse for various types of behaviour that can not be accounted for unless it is assumed that this type of ‘control’ is temporarily lost: hence the idea of divine intervention that uncontrollably impairs one’s normal cognitive faculties. As such, these expressions do indeed offer an anti-scenario for *σωφροσύνη*: the blunders committed by men who lose their *φρένες* are remarkably like the misdemeanours that the *κώφρων* man of later Greek literature will characteristically avoid.

Close to this type of expressions are two adjectives (and their cognate substantives): *ἄεσιφρων* and *ἄφρων*. The former, signifying ‘bewilderment of *φρένες*’<sup>33</sup> is used to describe social offences, from a breach of fair play<sup>34</sup> to the rather more serious misdemeanour of the Centaur who wreaks havoc in the house of Pirithous.<sup>35</sup> But similarly, one may be induced to harm one’s own interest. Thus, it is only out of *ἄεσιφροσύνη* (*Od.* 15.470) that Eumaeus follows the woman who will have him sold as a slave. Conversely, Achilles says that Priam will never give a special *γέρας*

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tor’s warnings (*Od.* 2.243, *φρένας ἡλέε*), and when Penelope criticises Telemachus for allowing the beggar Odysseus to be treated disgracefully (*Od.* 18.215 *Τηλέμαχ’*, *οὐκέτι τοι φρένες ἔμπεδοι οὐδὲ νόημα*, ‘Telemachus, you do not have stable *φρένες* any longer’, cf. 18.220 *οὐκέτι τοι φρένες εἰσὶν ἐναΐσιμοι οὐδὲ νόημα*).

<sup>33</sup> On the doubtful etymology of *ἄεσιφρων* (from *ἄημι* or, as *ἄασιφρων*, from *ἄαω/ἄτη*), cf. *LfggE* s.v. *ἄασιφρων*. Chantraine s.v. *ἄαω*, Clarke (1999) 82n.52.

<sup>34</sup> *Il.* 23.602-4 *Ἀντίλοχε νῦν μὲν τοι ἐγὼν ὑποείξομαι αὐτὸς | χωόμενος, ἐπεὶ οὐ τι παρήγορος οὐδ’ ἄεσιφρων | ἦσθα πάρος· νῦν αὖτε νόον νίκησε νεοίη*. (‘Antilochos, now I will give way to you spontaneously, because before you were not at all light-hearted nor *aesiphrōn*, but now your youth has conquered your mind.’)

<sup>35</sup> *Od.* 21.301-2 *ὁ δὲ φρεσὶν ἦσιν ἄασθεις | ἦεν ἦν ἄτην ὀχέων ἄεσιφρονι θυμῷ*. (‘He, blinded in his *φρένες*, went about bearing his blindness in an *aesiphrōn* heart.’)



to Aeneas, since he has children of his own and a mind that is still ‘stable’ rather than bewildered.<sup>36</sup>

Even wider in range (and frequent as a very general antonym of *ῥῶφρων* in later literature) is the adjective *ἄφρων* with its cognate *ἄφροσύνη*. These terms likewise decry both ‘foolish’ acts that are dangerous and probably harmful to their agents<sup>37</sup>, and ‘social’ offences like disregard for a suppliant or breeches of the rules of *hospitality*.<sup>38</sup> Such ‘social’ considerations are also relevant when Telemachus suggests to the suitors that he is *ἄφρων* to sit and eat in the hall while his mother intends to leave the house.<sup>39</sup> And when Pandarus is *ἄφρων* to let himself be persuaded by Athena to break the truce,<sup>40</sup> the term no doubt conveys both that it is not ‘done’ to do so, and the ‘folly’ of breaking a truce with, ultimately, very bad consequences for one’s own party.

But *ἄφρων* is also used when people make the impression of being ‘incapable of sensible speech’;<sup>41</sup> here, the term stands in

<sup>36</sup> *Il.* 20.182-3 οὐ τοι τοῦνεκά γε Πρίαμος γέρας ἐν χειρὶ θήσει· | εἰς γὰρ οἱ παῖδες, δ’ δ’ ἔμπεδος οὐδ’ ἀεσίφρων. (‘For that, Priam will not give you a *geras*. He has children, and his mind is stable, not *aesiphron*.’)

<sup>37</sup> See *Il.* 7.109-110 ἀφραῖνεις Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ | ταύτης ἀφροσύνης (‘You are mad, Menelaus, and you do not need such madness.’ Menelaus proposes to accept Hector’s challenge to single combat); *Il.* 15.104 νῆπιοι οἱ Ζηνὶ μευκαίνουμεν ἀφρονέοντες. (‘We fools, who in our folly fight with Zeus.’)

<sup>38</sup> Achilles’ treatment of a suppliant: *Il.* 24.157-8 οὔτε γὰρ ἔστ’ ἄφρων οὔτ’ ἄσκοπος οὔτ’ ἀλιτήμων. | ἀλλὰ μάλ’ ἐνδυκέως ἰκέτεω πεφιδῆσεται ἀνδρός. (‘He is not mindless, not careless, nor insensitive to litigation: he will take care to spare a suppliant.’) Offences against the rules of *hospitality*: *Od.* 8.209 ἄφρων δὲ κείνός γε καὶ οὐτιδανὸς πέλει ἀνὴρ, | ὅς τις ξεινοδόκῳ ἔριδα προφέρηται ἀέθλων. (‘Foolish and useless is the man who starts a quarrel with a host because of games.’); 16.278 ἀλλ’ ἦ τοι παύεσθαι ἀνωγέμεν ἀφροσυνάων (‘But really, do encourage them to stop their folly’); *Od.* 24.456-7 οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ πείθεσθ’, οὐ Μέντορι ποιμένι λαῶν, | ὑμετέρους παῖδας καταπανέμεν ἀφροσυνάων. (‘You do not listen to me, nor to Mentor, herdsman of the people, and stop your sons from their folly.’)

<sup>39</sup> *Od.* 21.102-5 ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα με Ζεὺς ἄφρονα θῆκε Κρονίων· | μήτηρ μὲν μοί φησι φίλη, πινυτή περ εἴουσα, | ἄλλω ἄμ’ ἔψεσθαι νοσφισσαμένη τόδε δῶμα· | αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ γελῶ καὶ τέρπομαι ἄφρονι θυμῷ. (‘O dear, Zeus, son of Kronos, did make me mindless indeed. My dear mother says, sensible as she is, that she will go with another man and leave this house. And yet, I laugh and entertain my foolish heart.’)

<sup>40</sup> *Il.* 4.104 τῷ δὲ φρένας ἄφρονι πείθεν. (‘He persuaded his foolish heart.’)

<sup>41</sup> See *Il.* 3.220 φαίης κε ζᾶκοτόν τέ τιν’ ἔμμεναι ἄφρονά τ’ αὐτως. (‘You would say that he was a sullen and downright mindless person.’); *Od.* 6.187 οὔτε κακῶι οὔτ’ ἄφρονι φωτὶ ἔοικας (‘You do not look like a bad man, nor like a

opposition to *πεπνυμένος*, which commends the ability to speak 'wisely' (see section 5 below). And it has already been noted that the term is used in contrast with *ἐπίφρων* by Penelope to mean 'inattentive' at *Od.* 23.12. The 'absence of *φρένες*' that *ἄφρων* decries, then, has many different manifestations; accordingly, *ἄφρων* functions as a very general opposite to several terms describing good sense and proper behaviour.

Thus, the present section has shown that someone who is tempted to do something that is either unaccountably harmful to himself, or unacceptable to his peers, is charged with a loss of control, and excused with the metaphorical explanation that this is due to a divine intervention and a (temporary) 'loss' of *φρένες*. This is what one may call the 'anti-scenario' to that of *καφροσύνη*, which commends the ability to refrain from such behaviour. Whereas a 'loss of *φρένες*' is usually regarded as a temporary (often indeed highly uncharacteristic) 'lapse' of a normally sensible person, *ἄφρων* and *ἀφροσύνη* may on occasion suggest a more permanent 'inadequate' mentality.

##### 5. *Models of Good Sense and Control: Penelope, Telemachus and Odysseus*

As we have seen in section 3, the considerable role of *αἰδώς* in social interaction in Homer is probably one factor in the explanation of the comparative rarity of *αόφρων* and cognates.<sup>42</sup> Another important factor is the fact that epic diction has a number of other (poetic) adjectives that describe aspects of good sense that are elsewhere associated with *καφροσύνη*.

This is especially clear from the case of the three protagonists of the *Odyssey*, who manage to deal with considerable hardship

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mindless one.') cf. 20.227); 17.586 οὐκ ἄφρων ὁ ξείνός οἵεται ('the stranger does not seem to be mindless.').

<sup>42</sup> There is probably a correlation here between the relative frequencies of the two terms: when *καφροσύνη* grows in importance, *αἰδώς* would seem to go somewhat in decline. Cf. Cairns (1993), 48: 'In Homer the range over which *αἰδώς* is employed is at its widest, and to a great extent the subsequent history of the concept is one of refinement of its uses and diminution of its prominence.'

thanks to their good sense and intelligence, and thus manifest a sustained character of ‘good sense’. Odysseus employs great cunning and endurance not only during his voyage, but especially in his strategy in regaining his house and possessions; meanwhile, Penelope remains the loyal wife and carefully manages to put off responding to her suitors, whereas Telemachus grows up to deal sensibly with the less-than-welcome guests in his house. In connection with all three, there is a remarkably rich vocabulary for praise of the various aspects of their ‘good sense’.

All three, then, are models of ‘good sense’ in their various ways, and all three have at some time been regarded as a model of *σωφροσύνη*.<sup>43</sup> The present section will consider some terms that are used specifically to describe these *σώφρων*-like characteristics.

### 5.1. *Penelope*

Penelope’s main characteristic is of course her loyalty to Odysseus and his *οἶκος*. On the basis of non-epic usage, one would expect her to be the *σώφρων* figure in epic poetry *par excellence*. Penelope is not called *σάφρων* in Homer, however. Instead, there are specific poetic epithets that seem to be associated with this main feature of her character, notably *περίφρων* and *ἐχέφρων*. Of these, the former is the most common;<sup>44</sup> *ἐχέφρων* is used in its stead for metrical reasons, either to effect *correptio epica* after a diphthong, or to avoid the positional lengthening of a short syllable ending in a consonant.<sup>45</sup> Most occurrences of

<sup>43</sup> See p. 42n1.

<sup>44</sup> Penelope: *Od.* 1.329, 4.787, 4.808, 4.830, 5.216, 11.446, 14.373, 15.41, 15.314, 16.329, 16.409, 16.435, 17.36, 17.100, 17.162, 17.492, 17.498, 17.528, 17.533, 17.562, 17.585, 18.159, 18.177, 18.245, 18.250, 18.285, 19.53, 19.59, 19.89, 19.103, 19.123, 19.308, 19.349, 19.375, 19.508, 19.559, 19.588, 20.388, 21.2, 21.311, 21.321, 21.330, 23.10, 23.58, 23.80, 23.104, 23.173, 23.256, 23.285, 24.404. Other women: Euryclēia: *Od.* 19.357, 19.491, 20.134, 21.381. Adrestine: *Il.* 5.412. Arete *Od.* 11.345.

<sup>45</sup> *ἐχέφρων* after a diphthong shortened through *correptio epica*: *Il.* 9.341 ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων (a man like Achilles); *Od.* 13.332 καὶ ἐχέφρων (Odysseus); *Od.* 4.11, 13.406, 16.458 καὶ ἐχέφρων/-ονι/-ονα Πηνελόπεια/-η/-αν; *Od.* 17.390 εἶός μοι ἐχέφρων Πηνελόπεια | ζῶει; after a consonant: *Od.* 16.130, 24.198,

these adjectives, *περίφρων* especially, are in formulaic utterances like speech introductions; in such cases, of course, it is not always easy to see what kind of ‘good sense’ exactly the adjectives commend, nor if there are any elements in the context that makes their occurrence especially appropriate. But both *περίφρων* and *ἐχέφρων* are also used in less stereotyped surroundings (occasionally also with reference to other persons) and these passages provide us with a clue for the interpretation of the words: in all of them, an association with the theme of ‘loyalty’ is established in these contexts.

In the single Iliadic occurrence of *ἐχέφρων*, for a start, Achilles compares his care for Briseïs with the great pains that the sons of Atreus take to recover Helen:

ἦ μῶνοι φιλέουσ' ἀλόχους μερόπων ἀνθρώπων  
 Ἄτρεϊδαι; ἐπεὶ ὅστις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων  
 τὴν αὐτοῦ φιλεῖ καὶ κηδεταί, ὥς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν  
 ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον, δουρικτῆτην περ ἑοῦσαν.  
 (Il. 9.340-3)

Or are the only ones among men to be attached to their women the sons of Atreus? No: every man who is *ἀγαθός* and *ἐχέφρων* is loyal to, and cares for his own wife, just like I as well was fondly attached to this one, even though she was indeed captured in war.

In these lines, Achilles explains his anger at the loss of Briseïs explicitly in terms of marital loyalty (expressed by the verb *φιλεῖν*): according to him, this loyalty is shared by any man who is *ἀγαθός* and *ἐχέφρων*, as can be seen from the care that Menelaus takes to recover Helen.<sup>46</sup> Loyalty, this time between goddess

24.294 *ἐχέφρων/-ου Πηνελόπεια/-ηι*. Echephron is also the name of a ‘good’ son of Nestor (*Od.* 3.413, 3.439).

<sup>46</sup> The passage has puzzled critics because of its, for Homer, exceptional use of *ἀγαθός* in a ‘non-competitive’ context, and Adkins (1960), 40, calls this a persuasive definition. He comments ‘no successful *agathos* is likely to agree.’

The use of *ἀγαθός* in such a non-competitive context is indeed remarkable. (Pace Cairns (1993), 127, *Od.* 18.383, *οὐνεκα δὴ παύροις καὶ οὐκ ἀγαθοῖς ὁμιλεῖς*, ‘because you converse with few men of no outstanding character’, is not a non-competitive context, because the suggestion there is that the other men in the palace cannot compete with Eurymachos, just like Eurymachos himself could never compete with Odysseus.) But it must be noted that it is exactly the function of the addition *καὶ ἐχέφρων* to trigger the unusual interpretation of *ἀγαθός*; and Achilles presents the notion of loyalty as a common-

and man, is also relevant to the context of *Od.* 13.331-2, where Athena tells Odysseus that *she* could not let him down because he is ‘a clever speaker, sharp-witted and *echephron*’.<sup>47</sup> More importantly, *ἐχέφρων* is used with reference to Penelope’s loyalty when Agamemnon’s ghost praises the *ἀρετή* of the wife of ‘fortunate Odysseus’:

ὄλβιε Λαέρταο πάϊ, πολυμήχαν’ Ὀδυσσεῦ,  
 ἧ ἄρα σὺν μεγάλῃ ἀρετῇ ἐκτίσῃ ἄκοιτιν  
 ὡς ἀγαθαὶ φρένες ἦσαν ἀμύμονι Πηνελοπείῃ,  
 κούρηι Ἰκαρίου, ὡς εὖ μέμνητ’ Ὀδυσῆος,  
 ἀνδρὸς κουριδίου. τῷ οἱ κλέος οὐ ποτ’ ὀλείται  
 ἥς ἀρετῆς, τεύξουσιν δ’ ἐπιχθονίοισιν αἰοδὴν  
 ἀθάνατοι χαρίεσσαν ἐχέφρονι Πηνελοπείῃ,  
 οὐχ ὡς Τυνδαρέου κόρη κακὰ μῆατο ἔργα,  
 κουρίδιον κτείνασα πόσιν, στυγερὴ δέ τ’ αἰοδὴ  
 ἔσσετ’ ἐπ’ ἀνθρώπους, χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει  
 θηλυτέρησι γυναιξί, καὶ ἥ κ’ εὐεργὸς ἔησιν.  
 (*Od.* 24.192-202)

Fortunate son of Laertes, resourceful Odysseus: you have really acquired a woman with great *ἀρετή*. How good have the *φρένες* turned out to be of the irreproachable Penelope, daughter of Icarus, how well did she remember Odysseus, her one-and-only husband. Therefore her fame will never perish, the reputation of her *ἀρετή*, and the gods will give mortals a pleasing song in honour of *ἐχέφρων* Penelope, quite unlike the way the daughter of Tyndareus conceived bad deeds, killing the man to whom she was given first. This will be an awful song among men, and she brings an ill reputation on women, even on those who work well.

The passage is important, for it shows both that it is indeed Penelope’s loyalty to Odysseus, strongly contrasted to the behaviour of Clytemnestra, which is highlighted by the epithet. It seems significant that in line 192, where Agamemnon is only ex-

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place applicable to every sensible man (*ὅστις* ...), and exemplified very clearly by the very competitive Atreids themselves. Thus, he clearly does *not* expect his fellow-*agathoi* to disagree.

If there is a ring of special pleading to the passage, it is rather that Achilles wishes to prevent any feeling that his reaction is disproportionate by claiming that every sensible man would feel the same.

<sup>47</sup> *Od.* 13. 331-2 τῷ σε καὶ οὐ δύναμαι προλιπεῖν δύστηνον ἔοντα, | οὐνεκ’ ἐπητής ἐσσι καὶ ἀγχίνοος καὶ ἐχέφρων. (‘Therefore, I can never let you down in your misery, because you are a speaker, sharp-witted and *ἐχέφρων*.’)

pressing Penelope's general suitability as a marriage partner, ἀμύμονι ('irreproachable') and *not* ἐχέφρωνι is used. Here, the reasoning goes that ἀμύμων Penelope turned out to have good φρένες, for she remained loyal to Odysseus. 'Loyal Penelope remained loyal' would make no sense in this context, and ἀμύμων here seems to draw attention to Penelope's general suitability as a wedding partner rather than to her tried-and-tested marital fidelity.<sup>48</sup> When Penelope's loyalty has been established, ἀμύμονι is duly replaced by ἐχέφρωνι in line 198.

The passage also shows that it is loyalty of this kind that provides a woman with a claim to ἀρετή *tout court*. In many texts of the classical period, *σωφροσύνη* in the sense of 'being a faithful wife' is regarded as *the* female virtue *par excellence*; one must conclude that the ideology has remained unchanged even if the labels have not.

The passage from *Od.* 24 echoes a similar, but less elaborate praise of Penelope by the ghost of Agamemnon in *Od.* 11, when he predicts that, unlike himself, Odysseus will not be killed by his wife: 'For the daughter of Icarius, *periphrôn* Penelope, is very much *pinutê* and has good thoughts in her mind.' (*Od.* 11.445-6 λίην γὰρ πινυτή τε καὶ εὖ φρεσὶ μῆδεα οἶδε | κούρη Ἰκαρίοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπειη.) Here, *περίφρων* is used in an exactly similar context; once again, it appears that it must indeed be Penelope's loyalty that is suggested by the epitheton.

If, on the basis of these examples, it seems probable that the use of the adjectives *περίφρων* and *ἐχέφρων* ('sensible') is especially associated with Penelope's main characteristic of loyalty to Odysseus, this hypothesis seems to be confirmed by the use of the epithets elsewhere: both adjectives typically occur in the many contexts where Penelope's attachment to Odysseus (and his *oikos*) is exemplified.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> For ἀμύμων with reference to girls about to be married, cf. *Od.* 4.4 (the daughter of Menelaus), and 7.303 (Nausikaa).

<sup>49</sup> Thus, *περίφρων* is first used in the description of Penelope's agonised reaction to the *αἰιδός* singing about the *νόστος* of the Achaean heroes (*Od.* 1.329), and in *Od.* 4.111, Menelaus supposes that ἐχέφρων Πηνελοπεία must grieve for her absent husband. When Telemachus has gone to Pylus and Sparta, the worry for his safety becomes an additional source of grief, and her care for both Telemachus and Odysseus is a dominant theme of Penelope's

Elsewhere, Penelope is called *πινυτή*. Here, a specific association with her characteristic loyalty is not so firmly activated; rather, a more general and inclusive sense of social decorum seems to be invoked by the word, which seems to relate to the general good sense that runs in the family. The adjective *πινυτός*

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exchange with Athena (*περίφρων* at the start of the episode in 4.787, and in speech introductions in 4.808, 830). Consequently, it is to *περίφρονι/ἑχέφρονι Πηνελοπείῃ* that both Eumaeus and a messenger bring the message of the young man's safe return (*Od.* 15.41, 16.130, 16.329; at 15.314, Odysseus-the-beggar offers to bring the message to her himself), even though Eumaeus is instructed *not* to tell her yet about the homecoming of Odysseus himself (16.458). Penelope is *περίφρων* when she comes out of her rooms to welcome her son back (17.36). Earlier in the poem, Odysseus himself uses the word *περίφρων* to praise his wife's loyal character when he tells Calypso that he wants to go home to his own wife, even though she is but a mortal woman (5.216). In the second part of the poem, *περίφρων* is used when the good connections between Penelope and faithful Eumaeus are mentioned (13.406, 14.373, 17.390). Penelope is called *περίφρων* when she goes out to tell the suitors that they should not plan further actions against Telemachus (16.409); in reaction to this she is addressed as *περίφρον* by Eurymachos, who responds with a false declaration of loyalty to Telemachus (16.435; a harsher response to Penelope's feelings of loyalty to Odysseus is given by Antinous in 18.285); similarly, she is *περίφρων* when she takes offence at the way the suitors treat guests (20.388).

But Penelope's main concern remains with Odysseus himself. She decides to address the suitors in order to acquire greater *τιμή* in the eyes of her son and husband (18.159) but refuses to dry her tears after weeping for Odysseus (18.177), and when Eumaeus addresses her (18.245) to praise her beauty, stature and good sense (*εἶδος τε μέγεθός τε ἰδὲ φρένας*, 18. 249), she claims that her *ἀρετή*, *εἶδος* and *δέμας* have been destroyed by the gods on the day Odysseus left. Her concern even extends to Odysseus-in-disguise: she is *περίφρων* when worried about the beggar who is injured by Antinous (17.492, 498). Unsurprisingly, Penelope is called *περίφρων* whenever it is suggested that someone may have some information about his fate (Telemachus in 17.100, Theoclymenus in 17.162, Odysseus-the-beggar in 17.528, 17.553, 17.562, 17.585). Therefore, the adjective occurs frequently in the episode when Penelope comes out of her rooms to speak to Odysseus-the-beggar (19.53, 59, 89, 103, 123, 308, 349, 375, 508, 559, 588). When the beggar is washed by the faithful (*κεδνὰ ἰδύλα*, 19.346) Eurycleia, the old woman momentarily takes her place, and *she* is now credited with the very same loyalty as her mistress (19.357, 491, 20.134). In book 21, when the scene is set in preparation for Odysseus' revenge, Penelope is called *περίφρων* when she decides to organise the contest of the bow (21.2) and insists that Odysseus-the-beggar should also be given his chance (21.311, 321, 330), as is Eurycleia when she is instructed to close the doors of the hall (21.381). Finally, the adjective highlights crucial stages in the recognition scenes: Penelope's disinclination to believe that Odysseus has really returned for fear that the stranger might be an impostor (23.10, 58, 80), her instruction to move the bed that triggers the recognition (23.104, 173, 256), and Odysseus' narration of Tiresias' prophecies about his future toils and age.

is used by Athena to express that any sensible man would feel *νέμεσις* at the way the suitors are feasting in the house of Odysseus, and the good sons of Nestor are called *πινυτούς* by Menelaus.<sup>50</sup> The adjective is applied to Penelope herself not only at *Od.* 11.445, where Agamemnon does indeed stress her loyalty to Odysseus, but also at 20.131, where Telemachus uses the phrase *πινυτή περ ἐοῦσα* in mitigation of his criticism of Penelope's supposed neglect of Odysseus-the-beggar (in fact, she has taken good care of her disguised husband) and 21.103, where *πινυτή περ ἐοῦσα* underlines the incongruity of Penelope's feigned plans to leave the house.<sup>51</sup> In *Od.* 23.361, when Odysseus commands his wife to stay inside while he goes to see Laërtes, in view of the grudge that many will bear against the house in which the suitors were killed, he mitigates his command by suggesting that she herself is sensible enough to see what is due.<sup>52</sup>

So the conclusion must be that the epithets *ἐχέφρων* and *περίφρων* are especially associated with Penelope's main characteristic of the loyal 'good wife'.<sup>53</sup> In commending the 'female' *ἀρετή* of marital fidelity, they express what in later texts will be very central uses of *κώφρων*. If it is puzzling at first sight that *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη* are rare in Homer, part of the answer is that Homeric diction uses specific poetic words (not normally

<sup>50</sup> *Od.* 1.229 *νεμεσθήσεται τό κεν ἀνὴρ | αἵσχεα πόλλ' ὀρώων, ὅς τις πινυτός γε μετέλθοι.* ('A man would feel anger to see these many disgraces, if someone *pinutos* came along.');

*Od.* 4.211 *νείας αὖ πινυτούς τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν εἶναι ἀρίστους.* ('may my sons be *pinutoi* and excellent with the sword.');

<sup>51</sup> *Od.* 20.131, *τοιαύτη γὰρ ἐμὴ μήτηρ, πινυτή περ ἐοῦσα.* ('that is what my mother does, *pinutê* though she is.');

21.103f. *μήτηρ μὲν μοι φησι φίλῃ, πινυτή περ ἐοῦσα, | ἄλλωι ἄμ' ἔψεσθαι νοσφισσαμένη τόδε δῶμα* ('My dear mother says, sensible as she is, that she will go with another man and leave this house.').

The substantive *πινυτή* occurs *Il.* 7.289, *Od.* 20.71, 20.228.

<sup>52</sup> 23.361 *κοὶ δέ, γύναι, τάδ' ἐπιτέλλω πινυτῇ περ ἐούσῃ.* ('This, my wife, is what I tell you to do, *pinutê* though you be.')

<sup>53</sup> Scholars have not failed to note that, for a long time during the poem, some (residual) uncertainty remains whether Penelope will in fact manage to remain the faithful wife and will not submit herself to a scenario similar to that of her 'foils', Clytemnestra and Helen. If so, the epithets stress an ideal that will not prove itself true until very late in the poem. The uncertainty concerning Penelope's role has been stated strongly in terms of 'character' by Marquardt (1985), Murnaghan (1987); Felson-Rubin (1988) and Katz (1991), stress the functional importance to the plot of this 'indeterminacy' (see especially Katz (1991) 94-112).



found in common usage) in contexts where later authors would have used *ῥώφρων* or *ῥωφροσύνη*.

## 5.2. *Telemachus*

Telemachus' good sense, praised in terms of *ῥωφροσύνη* in connection with his youthful respect for Menelaus and for the commands of his father, is otherwise evident on many occasions when the young man acts more like an adult, especially in his many sensible speeches. There is also here an epithet that marks this particular quality of speaking sensibly and diplomatically, *πεπνυμένος*.<sup>54</sup> The term is used most often in speech introductions (*Od.* 1.213 etc.) but a connection with speech is clear in the majority of passages: the term typically applies to professional speakers such as counsellors (*Il.* 3.148 etc.) and heralds (*Il.* 7.276 etc.), to Odyssean 'wise old men' such as Nestor (*Od.* 3.20 etc.), Menelaus (*Od.* 4.190 etc.), Odysseus (*Il.* 8.388 etc.) and Laertes (*Od.* 24.375), and to the various young men who imitate these role models, Diomedes (*Il.* 9.58), Antilochus (*Il.* 23.440), Hermes (*Il.* 24.377), Pisistratus (*Od.* 3.52 etc.) and of course Telemachus himself. In the underworld, the shade of Tiresias is the only one equipped with *νόος* and *φρένες*; consequently, he is the only one capable of *πέπνυσθαι* (*Od.* 10.495) and making a speech that makes sense even without drinking blood from the libation.<sup>55</sup> So it seems to be Telemachus' capability to speak sensibly

<sup>54</sup> For *πεπνυμένος* and its connection with speech and wise and diplomatic speakers, see Austin (1975), 74-8, Vivante (1982), 108, and M.P. Cuypers in *LfjE* s.v. *πεπνυμένος*. Cf. also J. Heath (2001) 133: '*πεπνυμένος* and the other perfect forms related to it refer to a wisdom that comes through experience and age, and is very closely connected with speech.' Heath offers some good observations on Telemachus' maturation during the *Odyssey*, his 'growing into' the epithet *πεπνυμένος*.

<sup>55</sup> *Od.* 10. 492-5 *Θηβαίου Τειρεσίαο, | μάντιος ἀλαοῦ, τοῦ τε φρένες ἔμπεδοί εἰσι· | τῷ καὶ τεθνηῶτι νόον πόρε Περσεφόνεια | οἷωι πεπνύσθαι.* ('The Theban Tiresias, the blind seer, whose *φρένες* are stable: to him alone Persephone granted the intelligence to *pepnusthai* even after death.') See also Rijksbaron (1997), 203. LSJ s.v. *πέπνυμαι* treat *to be conscious* as a meaning separate from the more frequent *to be wise*, but they cite only the present instance and Call. *Lav. Pall.* 129-30 καὶ μόνος, εὔτε θάνῃ, πεπνυμένος ἐν νεκύεσσι | φοιταεῖ in its favour. In both cases it is the 'status' of Tiresias that is special, rather than the meaning of the verb.

in the manner of an adult, quite distinct from his youthful respect vis-à-vis Menelaus and Odysseus, with which the use of the epithet is especially associated. Interestingly, when the speech introduction τοῖσι δὲ καὶ / τοῖς δ' αὖθις μετέειφ' ἱερὴ ἴς Τηλεμάχιο is chosen in preference to one containing πεπνυμένος, the reference is to the assertive character of the young man's speech rather than his good sense.<sup>56</sup>

The sensible words and assertive deeds of the near-adult Telemachus strongly contrast with his helplessness, shyness and lack of perception as a child. This child-like state still largely subsists at the beginning of the poem, but after the encouragement of Athena (*Od.* 1.296-7), it is increasingly shed, even if both Telemachus himself and Penelope remain well aware of it throughout the poem. It is expressed by means of the adjective νήπιος and the cognate substantive νηπιέη, and these terms indicate his (former) speechlessness,<sup>57</sup> lack of perception (*Od.* 20.309-10 ἥδη γὰρ νοέω καὶ οἶδα ἕκαστα, | ἐσθλά τε καὶ τὰ χέρεια· πάρος δ' ἔτι νήπιος ἦα.) and his helplessness against the suitors (*Od.* 1.296-7 οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ | νηπιάας ὀχέειν, (but kill the suitors) ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι τήλικος ἐσσί).<sup>58</sup> The 'child-like' helplessness of the νήπιος is brought out by the fact that the adjective is frequently applied to children who are in need of protection<sup>59</sup> as well as to men who unwittingly make grave mistakes, especially mistakes that bring about their own deaths.<sup>60</sup> At *Il.* 22.445, νηπιή is said of

<sup>56</sup> *Od.* 2.409 (the command to go on board), 18.60 (encourages Odysseus-the-beggar to fight with Iros), 18.405 (a reproach against the suitors), cf. 21.101, 21.130.

<sup>57</sup> The semantic opposition between νήπιος and πεπνυμένος is confirmed by etymology, if νήπιος is indeed a hypocoristically shortened form of νήπυτιος (νᾱπυτιος deriving from ἀπύω 'speaking loud and clear'. The meaning suggested by etymology for νήπιος would then be 'not speaking clearly (as adults do). Cf. the remarks of Ruijgh, quoted by J. Heath (2001) 133n.1, where see also for further references.

<sup>58</sup> For Telemachus as νήπιος see also *Od.* 2.313, 4.818 (his misguided decision to sail to Pylos), 11.449, 18.229, 19.19, 19.530, 20.310.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. the Iliadic formula ἄλοχοι/-ους καὶ νήπια τέκνα, *Il.* 2.136 etc., and see *Il.* 6.366, 22.484, 24.726 (Astyanax), *Il.* 9.440, 9.491 (Achilles as a child).

<sup>60</sup> See *Il.* 12.113, 12.127 (Hyrtaeides and his men), 16.46, 16.686, 16.833 (Patroclus), 20.411 (Polydorus), 20.466 (Troas), 21.99 (Lycaon), 22.333 (Hector), *Od.* 1.8, 9.44 (Odysseus' men), 22.32, 22.370 (the suitors) and 24.469 (Eupheithes). Errors of great consequence are also discussed in *Il.* 2.38 (Agamemnon thinks that he will win the war), 5.406 (Diomedes fights the gods),

Andromache, and seems to draw attention to both her ignorance of Hector's death and her helplessness now that her protector has died.

### 5.3. *Odysseus*

Odysseus is perhaps primarily known as the cunning, ingenuous schemer. These qualities are, of course, highlighted by epithets such as *πολύμητις* (*Il.* 1.311 etc., *Od.* 2.173 etc., aptly used in the introductions to Odysseus' autobiographical speeches, in which invention flows freely:<sup>61</sup> *Od.* 9.1, 14.191, 19.165), *πολυμήχανος* (*Il.* 2.173 etc., *Od.* 1.205 etc.),<sup>62</sup> *ποικιλομήτης* (*Il.* 11.482, *Od.* 3.163; the most significant use is at 13.293, where Athena addresses his insatiable habit of 'cheating'),<sup>63</sup> *πολύτροπος* (*Od.* 1.1, 10.330)<sup>64</sup> and *πολύφρων* (*Od.* 1.83 etc., an epithet he shares with the clever craftsman Hephaestus: *Il.* 21.367, *Od.* 8.297, 327).<sup>65</sup>

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8.177 (the Greeks build a wall around their camp), 15.104 (the gods vs. Zeus), 17.236 (the Trojans), 17.497 (Hector and others hope to catch the horses of Achilles), 18.295 (Polydamas' advice is misguided according to Hector), 18.311 (the Trojans ignore the warning of Polydamas); 20.296 (Aeneas in great danger), 23.88 (Patroklos commenting on his youthful manslaughter), and *Od.* 3.146 (Agamemnon thinks he can appease Athena), 4.371 (Menelaus lingering on Pharos), 4.818 (Telemachus has gone to Pylus), (Odysseus' men), 9.442 (the Cyclops). Lack of knowledge or perception is described at *Il.* 20.264 (Achilles does not yet know how to handle his new weapons), *Od.* 9.273, 9.419 (Odysseus lacks knowledge about the Cyclops), 13.237 (Odysseus seems not to know Ithaca), 21.85 (Eumaeus' 'inconsiderate' weeping decried by Antinous).

<sup>61</sup> On the rhetorical functions of the various types of fiction deployed by Odysseus, see Emlyn Jones (1998) 144-54, Pucci (1987) 98-109, and Pratt (1993) 55-94.

<sup>62</sup> In the *Odyssey* especially, *πολυμήχανος* is used when Odysseus has contrived or is about to contrive the well-nigh impossible. Cf. Austin (1975) 52-3.

<sup>63</sup> Sacks (1987) 148-9 suggests that the formula *Ὀδυσσῆα δαΐφρονα ποικιλομήτην* replaces the Iliadic *Διὶ μῆτιν ἀτάλαντον* (*Il.* 2.169 etc.) at *Il.* 11.482 (where Odysseus has been wounded) and in the *Odyssey*, just because Odysseus, in these misfortunes, seems to be 'forsaken' by Zeus. His parallel argument, *ibid.*, that *νοστήσαι* *Ὀδυσῆα πολύφρονα* (*ὅνδε δόμενδε*), significantly stands *instead* of the Iliadic *Ὀδυσῆα Διὶ φίλον* (*Il.* 11.419, 11.473), is flawed in as much as *Διὶ φίλον* would be long by position before *(φ)όνδε*.

<sup>64</sup> It is likely that *πολύτροπος* addresses both Odysseus' many wanderings and his mental versatility, cf. Keil (1998) 110-4 and Pucci (1987) 24.

<sup>65</sup> Sacks (1987), 13-5, draws attention to the parallel between the cuckolded god of *Od.* 8, and Odysseus, who may yet find himself cuckolded as well on his return to Ithaca.

But Odysseus is also, on some occasions, a model of 'good sense'. Most relevant here is his endurance, signalled by the adjectives *πολύτλας* (*Il.* 8.97 etc., *Od.* 5.171 etc.), *ταλασίφρων* (*Il.* 11.466, *Od.* 1.87 etc.; the meaning 'with enduring *φρένες*' is confirmed in *Il.* 4.421 *ὑπό κεν ταλασίφρονά περ δέος εἶλεν*. ('Even a man with enduring *φρένες* would be seized by fear.'), and (*πολυ*)*τλήμων* (*Il.* 5.670 etc., *Od.* 18.319).<sup>66</sup> It is this 'καρτερία' that philosophical texts of a later period regard as Odysseus' most unequivocally positive quality (*Pl. R.* 390d, *X. Mem.* 1.3.7) and that is linked to *σωφροσύνη* by philosophical writers who conceive of *σωφροσύνη* in terms of 'self-control' (*Pl. Grg.* 507b, *X. Mem.* 1.2.1, *Arist. EN* 1145b14-15).

On two occasions, in fact, Odysseus shows unmistakable self-control, or at least control of his anger, in his reactions to the insults of Melanthius and Irus. To the provocations of the former, Odysseus does not react at all, even though he has clearly been angered by the goatherd's insults (the narrator mentions his emotion at 17.216 *ὄρινε δὲ κῆρ Ὀδυσῆος*):

... ὁ δὲ μερμήριξεν Ὀδυσεύς,  
 ἥε μεταίξας ῥοπάλῳ ἐκ θυμὸν ἔλοιτο  
 ἥ πρὸς γῆν ἐλάσειε κάρη ἀμφοῦδ' αἰείρας·  
 ἀλλ' ἐπετόλμησε, φρεσὶ δ' ἔσχετο.  
 (*Od.* 17.235-8)

And he considered, Odysseus, whether he should run after him and kill him with a club, or lift him up at both ears and throw him to the ground. He endured, and with his *φρένες* stopped himself.

Total self-control is not required in the confrontation with Irus, because the two beggars have in fact been encouraged to a fight by Antinous. But a measure of restraint turns out to be important for Odysseus here as well, lest he should show his exceptional power and give away his disguise:

δὴ τότε μερμήριξε πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσεύς,  
 ἥ ἐλάσει' ὥς μιν ψυχῇ λίποι αὖθι περόντα,  
 ἥε μιν ἥκ' ἐλάσειε τανύσσειέν τ' ἐπὶ γαίῃ.

<sup>66</sup> Critics have not failed to point out that the Iliadic instances of epithets like *πολύτλας* and *τλήμων* point predominantly to 'daring' and 'endurance' in battle, the Odyssean to 'endurance' of sufferings. See Heitsch (1964) 257-64, Marzullo (1952), esp. 24ff and 64-5, and Pucci (1987) 44-9.

ὥδε δέ οἱ φρονέοντι δοάσσαντο κέρδιον εἶναι,  
 ἦκ' ἐλάσαι, ἵνα μή μιν ἐπιφρασσαίᾱτ' Ἀχαιοί.  
 (*Od.* 18.90-4)

Then, naturally, enduring noble Odysseus considered whether he should beat him so that his soul would leave him at his fall, or whether he should beat him less vehemently and stretch him to the ground. While he was thinking the following seemed to be more advantageous to him: to beat the man less vehemently, lest the Achaeans might recognise him.

Now the expressions *μερμήριξε* and *ὥδε δέ οἱ φρονέοντι δοάσσαντο κέρδιον εἶναι* show that Odysseus' control of anger amounts to a calculation of pros and cons in view of the issues at stake (and therewith, it would seem, a rather good example of *σωφροσύνη*), a calculation that is decided by the choice for the 'more profitable' option.<sup>67</sup> But that should not be taken to imply that Odysseus' anger is less in evidence here: it certainly was in the description of the quarrel itself (see 18.14 *ὑπόδρα ἰδών* and Odysseus' warning *μή με χολώσῃς*, 18.20), and both the presence here of the adjective *πολύτλας*, signalling his endurance of unpleasant experiences, and the very violence of the attack he re-

<sup>67</sup> The formula *ὥδε δέ / ὥς ἄρα οἱ / μοι φρονέοντι δοάσσαντο κέρδιον εἶναι* is used three more times to describe the outcome of successful deliberation by Odysseus: *Od.* 5.474 (whether to stay on the river or sleep in the woods?), 6.145 (whether to take Nausicaa by the knee or keep at a distance?), 10.153 (whether go the house of Circe or back to the ships?), 24.239 (whether to tell Laertes all or try him first). Invariably, in dilemma's considering the most profitable line of action, the second alternative seems the more prudent. For the formula in connection with other persons, cf. *Il.* 13.458, 14.23, 16.652, *Od.* 15.204, 22.338. Elsewhere, at *Od.* 6.148, Od. speaks a *κερδαλέον μῦθον* to Nausicaa, 'a speech that is designed to bring him advantage': clothes and food (cf. Ameis-Hentze *ad loc.*). At *Od.* 11.358, he considers it *κέρδιον* to bring possessions with him to Ithaca, as this will make him seem more worthy of *αἰδώς* and thus further his safety (cf. Cairns (1993), 90, 113). At *Od.* 13.255, his cherishing a 'profitable plan' (*νόον κερδαλέον*) induces him to hide his identity to Athena, who cheerfully acknowledges his cunning deceit (13. 291f. *κερδαλέος κ' εἴη καὶ ἐπὶ κλοπος, ὅς σε παρέλθοι | ἐν πάντεσσι δόλοισι, καὶ εἰ θεός ἀντιάσειε*. 'Intent on profit and a cunning cheat is the man who would surpass you in schemes of all kind, even if a god comes your way.'). Athena goes on to explain that they are both especially renowned for knowing *κέρδεα* (*Od.* 13.295, 13.297). It is only in his narration of the confrontation with the Cyclops, that Odysseus has to admit that it would have been *κέρδιον* (*Od.* 9.228) to leave immediately, as his comrades wished. Cf. Pucci (1987) 59n.13.

jects, suggest that it has not abated. Moreover, the passage echoes the even greater anger of Achilles at Agamemnon's insults. Achilles is in fact on the brink of losing *his* self-control when Athena intervenes:

ὥς φάτο· Πηλεΐωνι δ' ἄχος γένετ', ἐν δέ οἱ ἦτορ  
 στήθεσσι λασίοισι διάνδιχα μερμήριξεν,  
 ἢ ὅ γε φάσγανον ὀξὺ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ  
 τοὺς μὲν ἀναστήσειεν, ὃ δ' Ἀτρεΐδην ἐναρίζοι,  
 ἧε χόλον παύσειεν ἐρητύσειέ τε θυμόν.  
 ἦος ὃ ταῦθ' ὤρμαινε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν,  
 ἔλκετο δ' ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος, ἦλθε δ' Ἀθήνη  
 οὐρανόθεν  
 (Il. 1.188-95)

Thus he spoke. But the son of Peleus felt pain, and in his hairy chest his heart considered two possibilities, whether he should draw his sharp sword from his thigh and scatter the other men and kill Agamemnon, or stop his anger and restrain his *θυμός*. While he was considering this in his *φρένες* and *θυμός*, and already drew his big sword from its sheath, down came Athena from heaven.

In this passage, Achilles is about to be overcome by his anger, and it is only Athena who eventually manages to stop him and convince him that it is 'better' to listen to the gods and refrain from the killing (Il. 1.217). No doubt the hearer is invited to compare the two scenes, and to conclude that Odysseus has a different way of dealing with anger at insults than Achilles, and that he has a very good reason to do so.

What this discussion of the 'good sense' of the protagonists of the *Odyssey* has shown, I think, is that the comparative rarity of *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη* in Homer cannot be taken to imply that the *behaviour* associated with the concept elsewhere is in any sense undervalued in Homeric 'morality'. Rather, the very rich epic diction has specific poetic terms that are used in association with some aspects of what in the classical period would be called *καοφροσύνη*. The clearest example of this is Penelope, who appears as the very model of feminine *ἀρετή*, a superlative quality commended in the epic poems by *περίφρων* and *ἐχέφρων* rather than *καόφρων*. Telemachus, on the other hand, is called *καόφρων* when exhibiting the proper behaviour for a young man, and *πεπνυμένος* when showing an 'adult' kind of wisdom. Odysseus,

finally, shows great cunning and ingenuity (in later terminology *σοφία* or *δεξιότης* rather than *σωφροσύνη*), but also endurance and control of anger, which are related to *σωφροσύνη* in fourth century philosophical writings. Besides, he has a marked and characteristic capacity for deliberation.

## 6. Conclusion

The present chapter has shown that in Homer, *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη* are used in four ways: to describe a ‘sound’ state of mind, responsibility for one’s self-interest and quiet/submissive respect of young men versus their elders, and of servants versus their masters. (For an overview, see *Fig. 3* in chapter 9.3.) Thus, in Homer, the terms occur only in a limited number of situations, but in all these situations the ‘other-regarding’ notions of quiet and obedient behaviour versus a superior are, directly or indirectly, activated in the context, and this may point to a comparative centrality of these uses.

But though *σωφροσύνη* is clearly not the typical heroic quality, this does not mean that the types of *behaviour* elsewhere commended by *σωφροσύνη* are generally under-valued in Homer: the epic diction is rich in expressions that criticise unacceptable behaviour in terms of a loss of *φρένες*, and besides, there is a large number of terms that commend qualities rather similar to *καοφροσύνη*, including a range of epithets that describe aspects of ‘good sense’, some of which will be seen to be typically appraised in terms of *σωφροσύνη* in later Greek. Furthermore, epic diction frequently employs *αἰδώς* and cognates, terms that designate an emotion-like inhibition. In view of all this, it is suggested that it is the very richness of Homeric vocabulary above all that accounts for the rarity of *καόφρων* and *καοφροσύνη*.

The next chapter, focusing on the late archaic poetry of the *Corpus Theognideum*, will offer a radically different picture. Here we meet the *σωφροσύνη* of men as citizens of the archaic πόλις. And where the words are used to apply to agents who have a far more central position in society than boys and slaves, the terms will be seen to be applied in a wider variety of ways, and to a far larger number of situations and types of social interaction.

## CHAPTER THREE

### ARCHAIC POETRY

#### 1. *Introduction: σωφροσύνη and the Male Citizen*

After Homer, we meet *σωφρων* and cognates again in late archaic poetry.<sup>1</sup> Here, we are confronted with a strikingly different range of uses. Most archaic poetry is of course firmly embedded in the life of the city state, hence we now meet *σωφροσύνη* as a quality of the free male citizen, who refrains from injustice against his fellow citizens, and tries to avoid civil strife (*στάσις*). (Section 2). A firm link between *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* emerges from the moral prescriptions of the *Corpus Theognideum* (379, 754, 756); and *σωφροσύνη* as a safeguard for *ἐννομία* and an antidote to *στάσις* is prominent both in one of the political poems of the *Corpus* (39-52) and in poems of Pindar (*Pae.* 1.10) and Bacchylides (13.182-9). All these poems betray a strongly elitist, aristocratic bias, and indeed from now on till the end of the fifth century, *σωφροσύνη* as a political quality seems to be a stock feature of aristocratic/oligarchic propaganda. (As far as we can see, it takes long, in fact until well *after* the political turmoils of the late fifth century for *σωφροσύνη* to gain comparable significance in the self-representation of democratic Athens: the orators, especially Isocrates, are our main witnesses here. In Thucydides and Aristophanes, by contrast, the terms often carry outspokenly elitist overtones.)

Apart from these political uses, archaic poetry also offers some glimpses of *σωφροσύνη* in private life (section 3). In the symposium poetry of the *Corpus Theognideum*, *σωφροσύνη* figures as the mental control which is lost in drunkenness (*Thgn.* 483, 497) and the untroubled state of mind of a man who is free from *ἔρως* (*ibid.* 1326). Elsewhere, we first meet *σωφροσύνη* as the quality *par excellence* of the ‘good wife’ (Semonides 7.108), and as the ‘prudence’ of the man who saves his house by making sure that he gets such a wife (Hipponax fr. 182.1). And Pindar uses *σωφρων*

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<sup>1</sup> On the absence of the term *σωφροσύνη* in Hesiod, see p. 7 n.12.



in a consolatory poem for Hiero to praise Chiron, who taught men to accept the limits of mortality (*P.* 3.63). This thought, though apparently a standard phrase of consolation, is interesting because it is linked to an idea prominent in tragedy (Aeschylus, especially: see chapter 4) that *σωφροσύνη* enables man to accept the constraints of mortality and the superiority of the gods.

## 2. *Political Uses of σωφροσύνη: Theognidea, Pindar, Bacchylides*

The poems of the so-called *Corpus Theognideum* — which stand together not on account of their authorship strictly speaking,<sup>2</sup> but because they belong to the context of the aristocratic symposium, express essentially similar and distinctly ‘aristocratic’ values, and date from roughly the same epoch<sup>3</sup> — address a wide range of themes proper to the aristocratic *symposion*, from love and wine (and the proper ways to deal with these) to the various moral prescriptions pertaining to the thoroughly aristocratic notion of being a noble citizen. As such, they share the aim of imparting the political concerns and general values of the Me-

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<sup>2</sup> Much of the discussion on the authorship has focused on the interpretation of the poet’s claim that there should be a *seal* (*σφραγίς*) on his poetry (19-20). Some, e.g. Jacoby (1931), followed by West, have taken this to refer to the name of the boy Cynos, and regard the poems where the vocatives *Κύνε* or *Πολυπαῖδε* occur as genuine. Jaeger (1945), 1.251-9, regards the poet’s own name (22-3) as the seal, and roughly regards the first part of the collection (up to 237-54) and some later verses as genuine Theognis. For a succinct and witty discussion of this view, see Van Groningen (1966), 446-9. Apart from the identification of the *σφραγίς*, the interpretation of the word itself has been disputed. Many take it as an expression of authorship; Woodbury (1952), 20-41, has taken it as indicating ownership rather than authorship, but fails to make the difference entirely clear. Ford (1985), 86, takes it as connected with the codification and publication of a corpus of aristocratic gnomological poetry; the *seal* then guarantees not the origin of the verses, but their ‘homogeneous political character and their aristocratic provenience’.

<sup>3</sup> West (1974), 65-71, takes 39-52 to be among the genuine works of Theognis, and dates the lines to the time immediately before the rise of the tyrant Theagenes., i.e. 640/630. Ancient chronographers, on the other hand, give Olympiad 59 (i.e. ca. 544-541) as Theognis’ *floruit*, probably in an attempt to link Theognis to Phocylides. Their date is accepted by Podlecki (1984). Lines 773ff. are almost certainly linked to the Persian invasion of 480. Nothing in the *Corpus* is demonstrably later. On the general chronology of Megara, see Figueira (1985).

garian aristocracy to younger members of their group.<sup>4</sup> This is apparent almost from the outset, when after three introductory invocations (1-10, 11-14, 15-18), the poet tells his addressee, the boy Cynus, that he will kindly give him advice such as he himself has learned from the ἀγαθοί, the nobles, in his youth (19-30).<sup>5</sup> What makes the poems important for our purposes is that many of them endorse *σωφροσύνη* as a full-fledged aristocratic value, a virtue relevant not only to the ways in which the individual citizen deals with the symposion-related phenomena of drink and love, but also as a civic virtue that keeps truly 'good' citizens from harming their peers.

Inextricably linked as it is with the life and views of the aristocracy, much of the poetry centres on the question what it means to have ἀρετή and be truly ἀγαθός and ἐχθλός,<sup>6</sup> qualities that optimally involve descent from noble parents, a good education and the acceptance of a number of 'aristocratic' values. The values and qualities that the poems emphasise particularly include aversion to ὕβρις, adherence to δίκη, sense of measure, endurance, *σωφροσύνη*. Of course it is generally impossible to relate the poems to specific historic events on account of both

<sup>4</sup> See West (1974), 11-2 and Patzer (1981), 203-7.

<sup>5</sup> 27-8: τοῖ δ' ἐγὼ εὖ φρονέων ὑποθήσομαι, οἶά περ αὐτός, | Κύρυν', ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγαθῶν παῖς ἔτ' ἐὼν ἔμαθον. 'I will kindly tell you what I myself, Cynus, learned from the *agathoi* when I was still a boy.'

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent study of ἀγαθός, ἐχθλός and its opposites κακός and δειλός in Theognis (and some parallels with Pindar), see Cerri (1968), 7-32. The outcome of Cerri's discussion is that, in the *Theognidea*, the terms ἀγαθός and ἐχθλός are reserved for those who combine high status with the appropriate aristocratic moral education; κακός and δειλός are those who fall short in one of these respects: 'Dunque ἀγαθός-ἐχθλός è colui che, appartenendo alla classe aristocratica per γένος e πλοῦτος, ne ha compiutamente assimilato la γνώμη; κακός-δειλός è chiunque sia privo di tale γνώμη, o perché, non appartenendo alla classe aristocratica, non abbia ricevuto la παιδεία, o perché, pur appartenendo alla classe aristocratica per γένος e πλοῦτος, non abbia tratto giovamento, per intrinseca sordità morale, dall'educazione ricevuta.' (p. 24). For a shorter discussion with essentially the same conclusions, see Von der Lahr (1992), 19-22. Even in those poems where ἀγαθός and ἐχθλός overtly refer to social classes (27-38, 39-52, 53-68, 183-6, 667-682, 891-4), it is nearly always implied that ἀγαθοί also differ from κακοί on account of their 'moral excellence' as well. The terms are used in a purely 'social' sense only in 57-8. Here the context states that social roles are fully reversed: the present ἀγαθοί are virtually savages who do not have any moral excellence, unlike the former ἐχθλοί (οἱ πρὶν ἐχθλοί) who are now reduced to δειλοί, status-wise.

the scarcity of data on the history of Megara<sup>7</sup> and the essentially gnostic nature (and uncertain provenance) of the majority of the poems themselves. Yet they unmistakably suggest a defensive attitude on the part of the elite, and their ideology seems to be that of a privileged group that feels threatened by significant social and economical changes, changes which meant that high birth and traditional education did no longer automatically go together with the wealth and influence that was felt to accord with it. In this respect, the ‘promotion’ of *σωφροσύνη* to a central ‘aristocratic’ excellence must be due to the need to redefine traditional standards of excellence in order to re-substantiate an elite’s weakening claims to social superiority.<sup>8</sup>

The social pressure felt by the poets is clearly in evidence in lines 429-38, where the poet (whom we perhaps may identify as Theognis on the testimony of Plato<sup>9</sup>) addresses the problem of the ‘bad’ son of a ‘good’ father:

φύσαι καὶ θρέψαι ῥᾷον βροτὸν ἢ φρένας ἐσθλάς  
 ἐνθέμεν· οὐδεὶς πω τοῦτό γ’ ἐπεφράσατο,  
 ὦι τις σῶφρον· ἔθηκε τὸν ἄφρονα κακὸν κακοῦ ἐσθλόν.  
 εἰ δ’ Ἀσκληπιάδαις τοῦτό γ’ ἔδωκε θεός,  
 ἰᾶσθαι κακότητα καὶ ἀτηρὰς φρένας ἀνδρῶν,  
 πολλοὺς ἂν μισθοὺς καὶ μεγάλους ἔφερον.  
 εἰ δ’ ἦν ποιητόν τε καὶ ἔνθετον ἀνδρὶ νόημα,  
 οὐπότ’ ἂν ἐξ ἀγαθοῦ πατρὸς ἔγεντο κακός,  
 πειθόμενος μύθοις καὶ σόφροσιν· ἀλλὰ διδάσκων  
 οὐποτε ποιήσεις<sup>10</sup> τὸν κακὸν ἄνδρ’ ἀγαθόν.  
 (429-38)

To beget and feed a human being is easier than to put noble *φρένες* in him. No one has yet found the device by which he has

<sup>7</sup> For the putative historical background of the poems, see especially the ‘Chronological Table Archaic Megara, 800-500 BC’ by T.J. Figueira in: Figueira and Nagy (1985), 261-303.

<sup>8</sup> Adkins (1960), 75-9, gives a good account of the various ways in which this can be done, though he seems to be one-sided in his account of the old ‘values’, stressing competitive excellence at the cost of anything else.

<sup>9</sup> In *Men.* 95c9-96a2.

<sup>10</sup> *ποιήσεις* ο Plato: -ης P. Berol. 12310 (ostr.): *ποιήσει* A. The reading of A is difficult, as it lacks a subject, unless it is to be supplied from *οὐδεὶς* (430) and *τις* (431). Van Groningen’s suggestion to take it as a second person middle is implausible. The v.l. *ποιήσεις* is supported by Pl. *Men.* 95e (and the third century Berlin ostrakon, which, however, seems to depend on the text of Plato rather than that of Theognis).

made *κώφρων* whoever is *ἄφρων*, or noble whoever is bad. If only the sons of Asclepius had been given this ability by the god, to cure badness and the blinded minds of men, they would have made large sums on many occasions. If thought were a thing that could be formed and put into a man, never would the son of a good father be bad: he would listen to *καόφροσιν* words. But by teaching you will never make the bad man good.

The poet expresses his concern that sometimes people, though from noble birth, do not live up to the standards of their class, and thus are not properly *κώφρων* and *ἐςθλός*. Thus, noble birth is not a guarantee for *ἀρετή*, and is not a sufficient condition for excellence. And, in the poet's sombre view, education is unable to provide qualities that are not given by birth: it is unable to instill qualities that were not at least potentially given by nature.<sup>11</sup>

The gulf between the right mentality and the wrong one, is similarly immense in 453-6:

ὦνθρωπ', εἰ γνώμης ἔλαχες μέρος ὥσπερ ἀνοίης  
καὶ κώφρων οὕτως ὥσπερ ἄφρων ἐγένου,  
πολλοῖς ἂν ζηλωτὸς ἐφαίνεο τῶνδε πολιτῶν  
οὕτως ὥσπερ νῦν οὐδενὸς ἄξιος εἶ.  
(453-6)

Sir, if only you had a share of sense, which you now completely lack, and were as *κώφρων* as in fact you are *ἄφρων*, you would seem enviable to many of the citizens of this town, as much as now you are utterly worthless.

Here is an addressee who apparently has some substantial assets (wealth or power, probably) that would make him truly enviable if only he had the right understanding (if only he had *γνώμη* and were *κώφρων*) he now conspicuously lacks. And the poet downplays these advantages by stressing the importance of this type of mentality and insisting that one is worth nothing without it.

<sup>11</sup> The expression *μύθοις καόφροσι* in 437 (and, again, *μύθῳ κώφρονι* in 756) predicates what is properly speaking the quality of the agent to the agent's utterances. This is of course a natural extension of the use of the adjective, given that the quality of *κωφροσύνη* typically manifests itself in the agent's words and deeds.

What does this mentality of *σωφροσύνη* entail, then? The gnostic poems quoted above tell us little about it, but there are others which say a little more. In 753-6, one learns that a ‘just’ way of acquiring goods is a sign of *σωφροσύνη*:

ταῦτα μαθὼν, φίλ' ἐταίρε, δικαίως χρήματα ποιοῦ,  
 σῶφρονα θυμὸν ἔχων ἐκτὸς ἀτασθαλίας,  
 ἀεὶ τῶνδ' ἐπέων μεμνημένος· εἰς δὲ τελευτὴν  
 αἰνῆσεις μύθῳ σῶφρονι πειθόμενος.  
 (753-6)

Understand this, dear friend, and acquire goods in a just way, keeping a *σῶφρων* *θυμός* free from recklessness, always keeping these utterances in mind; and in the end, you will say it is a good thing to give heed to *σῶφρων* advise.

The thought that one should not acquire wealth ‘unjustly’, whatever that may mean exactly,<sup>12</sup> recurs throughout the corpus. In 29-30, the poet tells his addressee Cynrus that he should not acquire honour, excellence and affluence through ugly and unjust deeds.<sup>13</sup> In a famous double couplet that is probably the most radical statement of the idea, poverty is said to be preferable to ‘unjust’ wealth, and *δικαιοσύνη* is claimed to be the single necessary and sufficient condition for virtue.<sup>14</sup> And in 197-208, wealth that comes from Zeus in a rightful manner and in a ‘pure’ way (*καθαρῶς*, 198), is contrasted with unjust riches acquired by someone who has his mind set on *κέρδος* (*φιλοκερδέϊ θυμῷ*, 199): the former will last, whereas the latter will not.<sup>15</sup> Justice can

<sup>12</sup> None of the poems is very explicit about this, though it is not infrequently (e.g. 200, 745, 1139, 1147) suggested that such injustice is accompanied by perjury and deceit.

<sup>13</sup> 29-30, *πέπνυσο, μὴδ' αἰσχροῖσιν ἐπ' ἔργμασι μὴδ' ἄδικοισιν | τιμὰς μὴδ' ἀρετὰς ἔλκεο μὴδ' ἄφενος*. (‘Be sensible, and do not employ disgraceful and unjust deeds to seize honour and privileges or wealth.’)

<sup>14</sup> 145-8 *βούλεο δ' εὖσεβέων ὀλίγοις σὺν χρήμασιν οἰκεῖν | ἢ πλουτεῖν ἀδίκως χρήματα πασάμενος. | ἐν δὲ δικαιοσύνῃ συλλήβδην πᾶς ἀρετὴ 'στι, | πᾶς δὲ τ' ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός, Κύρνε, δίκαιος ἔων*. (‘You should rather show respect and live with little property, than to be rich if you have earned your possessions in an unjust manner. In justice resides the whole of *ἀρετή* taken together, and every man is *ἀγαθός*, provided he is just.’)

<sup>15</sup> 197ff. *χρῆμα δ' ὃ μὲν Διόθεν καὶ σὺν δίκῃ ἀνδρὶ γένηται | καὶ καθαρῶς, αἰεὶ παρμόνιμον τελέθει. | εἰ δ' ἀδίκως παρὰ καιρὸν ἀνὴρ φιλοκερδέϊ θυμῷ | κτήσεται, εἴθ' ὄρκῳ πᾶρ τὸ δίκαιον ἑλών, | αὐτίκα μὲν τι φέρειν κέρδος δοκεῖ, ἐς δὲ τελευτῇ | αὐθις ἔγεντο κακόν*. (‘A property that comes from Zeus and with justice, in a pure manner, is something that will stay forever. But if a man will get it unjustly, at the wrong time, with a heart set on profit, or takes it by means of an

be pushed aside by desire for profit (κέρδος)<sup>16</sup> as it can by *ἀναιδείη* and *ὑβρις*.<sup>17</sup>

We have, then, roughly, two contrasted types of citizens: one type shows concern for *δίκη*, has *αἰδώς* and is *σώφρων*, the other practices *ἀδίκια*, is given to *ὑβρις* and lusts for *κέρδος*. In real life, of course, it is not always clear that the former is better off. But in 197-108, the conviction is expressed that the gods will make unjust men pay for their trespasses in the end, though some may die before receiving their due (207-8). Other poems are less optimistic: in 373ff., Zeus is scolded for giving unjust and just men the same share, even though he is supposed to know the minds of all:

Ζεῦ φίλε, θαυμάζω σε· cὺ γὰρ πάντεσσιν ἀνάσσεις  
 τιμὴν αὐτός ἔχων καὶ μεγάλην δύναμιν·  
 ἀνθρώπων δ' εὖ οἶσθα νόον καὶ θυμὸν ἑκάστου·  
 cὸν δὲ κράτος πάντων ἔσθ' ὕπατον, βασιλεῦ.  
 πῶς δὴ σε, Κρονίδη, τολμᾷ νόος ἄνδραc ἀλιτρούc  
 ἐν ταύτῃ μοίρῃ τόν τε δίκαιον ἔχειν,  
 ἦν τ' ἐπὶ cωφροσύνῃν τρεφθῇ νόος ἦν τε πρὸς ὕβριν  
 ἀνθρώπων ἀδίκαιc ἔργμαc πειθομένων;  
 (373-80)

Dear Zeus, you astonish me: you reign over all, having honour yourself as well as great power. Concerning men, you well know the mind and *θυμός* of each of them, and your power is the very highest, my king. How then, son of Cronus, can your *νόος* dare to hold villains and the just man in the same esteem, whether the mind of men is set on *σωφροσύνη* or turns to *ὑβρις*, succumbing to unjust deeds.

Once again, then, we have *σωφροσύνη* in a socio-political context, associated with being *δίκαιος*, and contrasted to *ὑβρις*. In these contexts, as we have seen, *σωφροσύνη* commends the ability to practise restraint in civic life, especially to refrain from making

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oath contrary to justice, it will seem to bring some gain at first, but turns out to be bad in the end.')

<sup>16</sup> 465-6 ἄμφ' ἀρετῇ τρίβου καὶ τοι τὰ δίκαια φίλ' ἔcτω, | μηδέ σε νικάτω κέρδος, ὃ τ' αἰσχρὸν ἔστι. ('Stick to ἀρετή and consider what is just to be yours. Never let profit that is ugly get the better of you.')

<sup>17</sup> 291-2 αἰδώς μὲν γὰρ δλωλεν, ἀναιδείη δὲ καὶ ὕβρις | νικήcαc δίκην γῆν κατὰ πᾶσαν ἔχει. ('Αἰδώς is lost, shamelessness and ὕβρις have the whole world in their grip.')

profit in unjust ways. It is thus the expression of an unmistakably 'conservative', 'elitist' ideology.

Now this combination of *ωφροσύνη* and justice clearly is the ideal, but it is equally clear that these qualities are by no means always rewarded, and that the ideal is by no means shared by all. In 701, the '*ωφροσύνη* of Rhadamanthys'<sup>18</sup> is included among those virtues that most people value less highly than wealth (*πλουτεῖν*, 700). Elsewhere, in 665f., it is said that the *κῶφρων* fails to achieve his ends (665, *καὶ κῶφρων ἤμαρτε*) whereas many times an *ἄφρων* has gained a good reputation (*δόξα*). Bleakest of all is the picture of the very Hesiodic lines 1135ff., where *Elpis* is said to be the only goddess left on earth now that *Pistis*, *Sôphrosyne*, and the *Charites* have all gone, with the result that people do not respect oaths anymore, and have no reverence for the gods.<sup>19</sup>

Occasionally, the ideology sketched above is applied more directly to the political situation in the poet's πόλις. Near the beginning of the collection, there are two poems that explicitly address political topics. The first of these, lines 39-52,<sup>20</sup> deploras

<sup>18</sup> Once again, it is impossible to decide from the context which quality exactly the expression commends, though it will very likely be Rhadamanthys' righteousness and integrity as a judge in the netherworld. Pi. P. 2.73-4 praises him for his irreproachable φρένες and integrity, ὁ δὲ Ῥαδάμανθος εὖ πέπραγεν, ὅτι φρενῶν | ἔλαχε καρπὸν ἀμώμητον, οὐδ' ἀπάταισι θυμὸν τέρπεται ἔνδοθεν. Ibycus (fr. 28 Page) speaks of Ῥαδαμάνθυνος τοῦ δικαίου. Cf. also Pl. Ap. 41a-b, and see the remarks of Cobb-Stevens in Figueira and Nagy (1985) 173.

<sup>19</sup> Ἐλπίς ἐν ἀνθρώποις μόνη θεὸς ἐσθλή ἔνεστιν, | ἄλλοι δ' Οὐλύμπόν(δ') ἐκπρολιπόντες ἔβαν· | ὥχετο μὲν Πίστις, μεγάλη θεός, ὥχετο δ' ἀνδρῶν | *Κωφροσύνη*, Χάριτες τ', ὦ φίλε, γῆν ἔλιπον· | ὄρκοι δ' οὐκέτι πιστοὶ ἐν ἀνθρώποις δίκαιοι, | οὐδὲ θεοὺς οὐδεὶς ἄζεται ἀθανάτων. | εὐσεβέων δ' ἀνδρῶν γένος ἔφθιτο, οὐδὲ θέμις τας | οὐκέτι γινώσκουσ' οὐδὲ μὲν εὐσεβίας. (1135-42) '*Elpis* is the only noble goddess among people, the others have left us and gone to Olympus. Gone is *Pistis*, the great goddess, gone is men's *ωφροσύνη*, and the *Graces*, my dear boy, have left the earth. Rightful oaths are no longer to be trusted amongst men, and nobody has any reverence for the immortal gods. The race of respectful men has gone, and they do not know anything about rights and respect anymore.'

<sup>20</sup> Following Carrière (1948), Garzya (1955), Young (1961) a.o., I take verses 39-52 to be a single, continuous poem. Some commentators, among them Kroll (1936) and Van Groningen (1966), take line 43 to be the start of a new poem, but the thought of these lines seems to be entirely consistent, and the elements of *Ringkomposition* between lines 39-40 and 51-2 (πόλις ἦδε – πόλει τῇδε, ἄνδρα εὐθυντήρα – μούναρχοι) seems decisive in favour of the unitarian view. For a full discussion of the matter, see Von der Lahr (1992) 11-17.

the ὕβρις of some of the present 'leaders', and addresses the imminent dangers of στάσις:

Κύρνε, κύει πόλις ἥδε, δέδοικα δὲ μὴ τέκηι ἄνδρα  
 εὐθυντήρα κακῆς ὕβριος ἡμετέρης.  
 ἀστοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἔθ' οἶδε καόφρονες, ἡγεμόνες δέ  
 τετράφεται πολλὴν εἰς κακότητα πεσεῖν.  
 οὐδεμίαν πω, Κύρν', ἀγαθοὶ πόλιν ὤλεσαν ἄνδρες,  
 ἀλλ' ὅταν ὕβριζέιν τοῖσι κακοῖσιν ἄδη  
 δῆμόν τε φθείρουσι δίκας τ' ἀδίκοις διδοῦσι  
 οἰκείων κερδέων εἵνεκα καὶ κράτεος·  
 ἔλπεο μὴ δηρὸν κείνην πόλιν ἀτρεμέεσθαι,  
 μηδ' εἰ νῦν κείται πολλῇ ἐν ἡσυχίῃ,  
 εὐτ' ἂν τοῖσι κακοῖσι φίλ' ἀνδράσι ταῦτα γένηται,  
 κέρδεα δημοσίῳ σὺν κακῶι ἐρχόμενα.  
 ἐκ τῶν γὰρ στάσιές τε καὶ ἔμφυλοι φόνοι ἀνδρῶν  
 μούναρχοι τὲ πόλει μήποτε τῇδε ἄδοι.  
 (39-52)<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> I generally follow the text printed by West, but in line 45 prefer *φθείρουσι* and *διδούσιν* (the reading of the oldest ms. A) to the subjunctives read by the *recentiores*, which look distinctly like a misguided attempt at syntactic 'normalisation'. However, pace Van Groningen (1966) 29 and Von der Lahr (1992), 14, I do not think that *φθείρουσι* and *διδούσι* can be taken as participles here, for two reasons:

(1) It is inconceivable that the present participles, connected with *τοῖσι κακοῖσιν*, expand the *dynamic* infinitive *ὕβριζέιν*, expressing what the *κακοί* *plan* or *intend* to do, rather than what they are doing already.

(2) The interpretation of *φθείρουσι* and *διδούσι* requires a strained interpretation of *ἀλλ' ὅταν*. As far as I have been able to establish, *ἀλλ' ὅταν* is used in contrasted expressions in two types of contexts:

- (I) 'Now/normally/often *x*, but when *y*...', then something else': e.g. Pi. *P.* 8. 95-7 *κιάς ὄναρ | ἄνθρωπος. ἀλλ' ὅταν αἶγλα διόδοτος ἔλθῃ. | λαμπρὸν φέγγος ἔπεστιν ἀνδρῶν καὶ μείλιχος αἰὼν*. Cf. S. *El.* 437, E. *Hel.* 296, Or. 773, Ar. *Ra.* 753 &c. Expressions with *ἀλλ' ὅταν* at the beginning of oracles that hint at an unexpected change of fortune/situation belong also to this type: Hdt. 1.55, 3.57, 6.77, 8.77.

- (II) 'Not now/normally *x*, but when *y*, (then indeed *x*)': e.g. Ar. *V.* 482-3 *ἀλλὰ νῦν μὲν οὐδὲν ἀλγείς, ἀλλ' ὅταν ξυνήγορος | ταῦτά ταυτά σου καταντλήῃ καὶ ξυνωμότας καλῇ*, 'Right now, you do not feel pain, but (you will) when ...'. Cf. Ar. *Pa.* 338, Av. 967, *Lys.* 1019, Th. 2.11.6, X. *Mem.* 1.4.14, *Smp.* 6.2 &c.

Here, the gnomic line 43 indicates that this is an example of construction (I); Von der Lahr's translation, '*das geschieht aber immer, wenn es den Verkommenen zu freveln beliebt, indem sie das einfache Volk korrumpieren und den Ungerechten Recht sprechen*' [my italics], tries to convert it into one of type (II).

After the subordinate clause *ὅταν ὕβριζέιν ... ἄδη*, one expects either a main clause expressing what happens when the *κακοί* decide to commit *ὕβρις*, or a continuation of the subordinate clause. *φθείρουσι* and *διδούσι*, if taken as



Cyrnus, this city is pregnant, and I am afraid that she may beget a man to correct our bad ὕβρις. For these citizens here are still *saophrones*, but the leaders are about to lapse into great *κακότης*. Never yet, Cyrrnus, have good men ruined any city, but when it pleases the bad to commit acts of ὕβρις, they ruin the people and pass judgement in favour of the unjust for the sake of their own profit and power. Do not imagine such a city to be peaceful for long — not even if it is now in a state of utter tranquillity — when its bad men decide that they are pleased with such things: profits coming along at the people's expense. For this leads to strife, civil manslaughter and monarchs: may this city of ours never be attracted to such things.

In the first couplet, the poet tells his addressee, Cyrrnus, that the city is 'pregnant', and that it is to be expected that it will produce a man to 'set straight' 'our' bad ὕβρις, which apparently means a tyrant.<sup>22</sup> This ὕβρις of the elite is contrasted to the behaviour of the common citizens, who still remain *καόφρονες*.<sup>23</sup> It is not im-

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indicatives, provide us with the former: 'but when the *κακοί* wish to commit ὕβρις, they ruin the people and pass sentence in favour of the unjust'.

Two possible objections to this interpretation are not decisive:

(1) τε . . . τε at the start of the main clause is no serious difficulty: cf. *Il.* 17.128-9 ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ ῥ' ἐν τοῖσιν ἐλίξεται ἀλκι πεποιθώς, | ἄψ τ' ἀνεχώρησαν διὰ τ' ἔτρεσαν ἄλλυδις ἄλλος.

(2) Nor is the asyndeton at 47 impossibly harsh, especially in view of the imperative ἔλπεο. Cf. line 29 πέπνυτο.

At line 47, I revert to the mss.' ἀτρεμέεσθαι, see Van Groningen *ad loc.*

<sup>22</sup> The v.l. ὑμετέρης, which appear in the later mss. OXDUrI is to be discarded. As Van Groningen (1966) *ad loc.* states, this would implausibly suggest that the poet excludes himself from these *hybristic* circles, but includes young Cyrrnus. Such a distance between poet and addressee seems unlikely.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Kroll (1936), 115; Van Groningen (1966), 27. The qualification *καόφρονες* should not be taken to imply that Theognis in any sense identifies with these common citizens (pace Nagy, who claims for the poet 'a more even-handed, 'Solonian' stance', see Figueira and Nagy (1985), 46). The poet simply notes, with evident relief, that the commons still know their place and do not (yet) revolt.

Von der Lahr (1992), 26-31 argues that ἀστοί here refers to a select number of *uncorrupted* leaders. (A similar interpretation of ἀστοί was offered by Hasler (1959), 35-8.)

But in the two key passages for his argument, ἀστοί refers either to parvenus (61 μῆδενα τῶνδε φίλον ποιεῖν Πολυπαῖδη ἀστών, where the term refers to farmers who are now influential inhabitants of the city) or to the population of the city proper in general (191, where the γένος ἀστών is said to 'become dim' (μαυροῦσθαι) by intermarriage with 'bad' citizens). In fact, ἀστός is a common word for an ordinary citizen living in the city itself, cf. Thuc. 6.54.2 on Aristogeiton (ἀνὴρ τῶν ἀστών), where the author shows an unmistakable sense of superiority over his 'common' subject.

mediately stated what this means exactly, because the poet first dwells on the transgressions of the 'leaders',<sup>24</sup> who commit all the typical transgressions decried throughout the corpus: unlike real *ἀγαθοί*, these depraved leaders ruin<sup>25</sup> the *dēmos* and pass unjust sentences for the sake of their own profit and power. The danger of such a situation is that such a city is not undisturbed (*ἀτρεμέεσθαι*, 47) for long, even if it now 'lies in great calm' (*κείται πολλῇ ἐν ἡσυχίῃ*, 48). Clearly, the *ἄστοί* who are wronged are likely to revolt, and the present state of *ἡσυχία* will last only as long as they are *still* (43) *καόφρονες*. The *σωφροσύνη* of the *ἄστοί*, then, means that they refrain from revolt and *στάσις*. This is confirmed after a restatement of the *ὑβρις* of the leaders (49-50)<sup>26</sup>: such injustice leads to strife (51, *στάσις*), civil manslaughter (*ἔμφυλοι φόνοι ἄνδρων*) and, finally, the rise of a tyrant (*μόναρχοι*) (51-2). As it turns out, the citizens' *σωφροσύνη*, which is still there but under considerable pressure, shows that they still commendably refrain from revolting against the 'bad' leaders, and thus give some hope that the dreaded tyranny may still be avoided.

In this poem, then, we grasp the full dimension of *σωφροσύνη* in the oligarchic *πόλις*: in the ideal situation, the *σωφροσύνη* of influential citizens who refrain from injustice is balanced by the 'quietness' of the common citizens, who have no need to revolt against such injustice. The preservation of this balance will guar-

<sup>24</sup> West (1974), 68-9 takes *ἡγέμονες* as referring exclusively to 'popular leaders' or champions of democracy. This view is not supported by Solon 4.7W, where *δήμου θ' ἡγεμόνων* equally refers in general terms to those in power. Moreover, if the poet specifically addresses the *kakotês* of a group from which he tends to dissociate himself most strongly, it would be almost inevitable to adopt the v.l. *ὑμετέρης* in line 40, which effects an unwanted distance to his addressee. See Fisher (1992), 208-9, Nagy (1985), 43 and Von der Lahr (1992), 23-4. For the passage of Solon, see Donlan (1970), 388-90.

<sup>25</sup> *φθείρουσι* must mean 'ruin' rather than 'corrupt' (Van Groningen (1966) 29: 'la plèbe est ameutée, excitée par des promesses illicites'; cf. Von der Lahr (1992) 49-50). See, eg. Hes. *Th.* 876 (*ναύτας*), Hdt. 2.133 (*ἀποκληϊσαντες τὰ ἱρὰ καὶ θεῶν οὐ μεμνημένοι ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους φθείρουσιν*), Sem. Iamb. fr. 1.12-3 (*τοὺς δὲ δύστηνοι βροτῶν | φθείρουσι νοῦχοι*); A. P. 244 etc. (*φθεῖραι στρατόν*), Th. 1.24.6 (*δεόμενοι μὴ χάς περιορᾶν φθειρομένους*) etc. In this context, the 'ruin' seems to be of a material nature.

<sup>26</sup> As Van Groningen points out, 49-50 repeats the thought of 44-6 in somewhat different terms. There are more elements of *Ringkomposition* in the poem as a whole: *μόναρχοι* (52) echoes *ἄνδρα* | *εὐθυνηῖρα* (39-40) and *πόλις* | *τῇδε* (52) echoes *πόλις* | *ᾗδε* (39).

antee the stability of the city as a whole, and thus to prevent the disasters of civil strife and, eventually, tyranny.<sup>27</sup>

The adaptation of lines 39-42 at 1081-1082b does not show much that is essentially different. Again, it is political instability (*στάσις*) that the poet fears most, and lines 1081-2 state the poet's fear that the *πόλις* may produce a leader of a revolt, *ἄνδρα | ὕβριστην, χαλεπῆς ἡγέμονα στάσιος*, 'a man given to ὕβρις, leader of unbearable strife'.

This praise of *σωφροσύνη* as a safeguard for the stability of the city is paralleled in a number of passages from Pindar and Bacchylides. *Εὐνομία καόφρων* is addressed in Ba. 13.186, near the end of a poem celebrating the Aeginetan Pytheas' pankration victory in Nemea:

Καὶ μὰν φερεκυδέα ν[ᾶσον]  
 Αἰακοῦ τιμᾶι, σὺν Εὐκλεί-  
 αι δὲ φιλοστεφ[άνωι] πό-  
 λιν κυβερναί,  
 Εὐνομία τε καόφρων,  
 ἃ θαλίας τε λέλογχεν  
 ἄστεά τ' εὐσεβέων ἀν-  
 δρῶν ἐν εἰ[ρ]ῇ φυλάσσει.  
 (Ba. 13.182-9)

And she (Areta) does really honour the renowned island of Aea-cus, and together with violet-crowned Εὐκλεία she governs the city, both she and *κώφρων* Εὐνομία, who is in charge of festivals, and guards the cities of respectful men in peace.

<sup>27</sup> I do not engage in the discussion on the date and provenance of this poem. West (1974), 68, dates these lines to the period immediately before the rise of the tyrant Theagenes., i.e. 640/630, on the argument that the poem could not have been written in this form if it had been composed after Megara had itself experienced tyranny. This early date is incompatible, however, with the poem's supposed dependency on Solon fr. 4W. Hence Von der Lahr (1992), 10, opts for a later date, and denies a Megarian origin. By contrast, Campbell (1976) 289-90 argues that nothing in the poem excludes a previous tyranny in Megara, and relates the poem to the period of the 'unbridled democracy' that, according to Plutarch (*Mor.* 295 C-D) and Aristotle (*Pol.* 1302b) the Megarians established soon after expelling Theagenes: 'It seems to me that all of Theognis makes sense if it is regarded as written during the Megarian democracy.' But see n. 24 above.

The passage seems to suggest that there was a serious threat of internal discord at the time in Aegina, and this is likely to reflect considerable tension between the aristocratic rulers of the island and a pro-Athenian, democratically oriented faction among the population: the poem must have been performed not long after the all-out war between Aegina and Athens described by Herodotus (6.73, 85-93), during which some Aeginetans defected to the enemy.<sup>28</sup> We cannot be sure whether the chronological connection between the two events is very close, but the poem itself suggests that both the internal instability and the anti-Athenian sentiments among the majority of the Aeginetans are still strong: the very defensive tone of the poet's praise of the youth's Athenian trainer, 13.190-209, is a strong piece of internal evidence for an anti-Athenian stance, and this is confirmed by the curt and grudging praise of the trainer in *Pi. N.* 5.48-9, composed for the same occasion.

If the combined problems of external hostility from Athens and internal conflicts are indeed the poem's historical background, the long second myth of the poem (13. 100-169) is highly relevant indeed: it focuses on the mighty figure of Ajax, son of Telamon, who stands his ground protecting the Greek ships from the Trojan invaders, while the other great grand-son of Aeacus, Achilles, is absent from the battle due to his conflict with Agamemnon. Thus, the myth seems to function as a carefully crafted piece of propaganda in two ways: on the one hand, the pernicious consequences of Achilles' absence illustrate the dangers of internal discord, and thus subtly dissuade from *στάσις*, while the figure of Ajax, standing as a mighty bulwark against the furious onslaught of the Trojans, seems to reflect on the role of

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<sup>28</sup> For the date of the fighting described by Herodotus, see Figueira (1988), 49-89. According to him, the ambush on the Athenian *θρωπίς* must have taken place in the spring of 489 or 488 BC, the hostilities that followed a considerable number of months later, in the summer season of 489, 488 or 487. The most commonly proposed date for *Ba. 13* and *Pi. N. 5* is 485 BC. For references see Pfeijffer (1995) 318-332, who arrives at 485 as the earliest possible date for both poems on the internal evidence of references in Pindar and Bacchylides to Aeginetan victories prior to Phylacidas' Isthmian victory of 478 (*I. 5*). Pfeijffer prefers 487 as a date for *Ba. 13* and *N. 5*, in which case the poems may have been performed during the war, but even if 485 is correct, it is only self-evident that the impact of the hostilities is still strong.

his historical descendants, the oligarchic leaders who defend the island against the strong Athenian neighbours.

In accordance with this two-fold message of the myth, the praise of Aegina that stands at its close, suggests that the island is honoured by both 'Virtue', Ἀρετή, 176 (paralleling the martial prowess of Ajax), and καὸφρων Εὐνομία (186), the state of internal political stability that is the opposite of the internal discord decried in the myth. So the poem makes very good sense if read against the background of (recent or imminent) war and civil strife in Aegina.

As in Theognis 41, then, καὸφρων commends the good sense of those common citizens who acquiesce in the status quo, and refrain from civil strife and στάσις. An unmistakable 'aristocratic' bias is common to both poems: while Theognis' poems suggest that all is well as long as the power is in the hands of those who are really ἀγαθοί, Bacchylides subtly dissuades his public from στάσις (and apparently from pro-Athenian 'democratic' sentiments), and seems to suggest that they should come to terms with their traditional 'aristocratic' governors again.

So Bacchylides 13 suggests that σωφροσύνη was an important catch-word used by the Aeginetan elite to advertise the 'stabilising' effects of their regime. Two Aeginetan poems by Pindar offer support for this assumption, by claiming σωφροσύνη as a quality of the mythical ancestors of the Aeginetan leaders, Aeacus and his grandsons. In Pi. I. 8, the poet stresses the Aeginetans' grief at the losses of the recent Persian wars.<sup>29</sup> Accordingly, the quality of σωφροσύνη is not directly connected to the political theme of εὐνομία here; rather, it applies to the mythical ancestors of the Aeginetans, the offspring of Aeacus, of whom it is said that

τοῦ μὲν ἀντίθεοι  
ἀρίστευον νίεες νί-  
έων τ' ἀρρήφιλοι παῖδες ἀνορέαι,  
χάλκεον στυγέοντ' ἀμφέπειν ὄμαδον  
σωφρονέες τ' ἐγένοντο πινυτοί τε θυμόν.  
(Pi. I. 8. 24-26)

<sup>29</sup> See for a discussion of the date Carey (1981) 184.

His godlike sons and warrior-grandsons excelled on account of their manliness, in going about the bronze groaning din of war, and they were *ωφρῶνες* and intelligent in spirit.

It seems reasonable to suppose that it is Peleus who is the best example of a *ωφρῶν* descendant of Aeacus, not only on account of the general tradition but also because he is called *εὐσεβέστατον* at line 40. By contrast, the most notable example of a descendant excelling in *ἀνορέα* is of course Achilles (not for nothing, it is the grandsons rather than the sons of Aeacus who are distinguished with the epithet *ἀρηΐφιλοι* in line 24): his *ἀρετά* is mentioned and described in 48ff. Ajax is of course another grandson of Aeacus, but he does not play a further role in the ode.<sup>30</sup>

It is not stated here how Peleus' *ωφροσύνη* manifested itself, but it seems quite likely that the terms alludes to his resistance to the amorous attempts of Hippolyta, wife of Acastus, an episode treated by the poet at some length in *Pi. N.* 5.26-37. Aristophanes alludes to the same story when he makes his Stronger Argument claim that Peleus got his knife on account of his *ωφροσύνη* (*Nu.* 1067).<sup>31</sup>

Does Peleus' *ωφροσύνη* reflect in any sense on his historical descendants? Achilles' *ἀρετά* certainly does: it is explicitly connected in the final strophe with the athletic prowess of Nicocles (61-65) and his nephew Cleandrus, who does his uncle's memory<sup>32</sup> proud (65a-70). And since the historical Aeginetans obviously take after their mythical ancestors in physical excellence, there may be a subliminal suggestion that they have got a share of the race's quieter qualities as well, which suggests that they are 'good' and 'moderate' rulers who further the political and social stability of Aegina. But it is the athletic excellence of the family that is emphasised here, and this emphasis on physical manliness is perhaps not surprising in a poem that clearly belongs to the immediate aftermath of the Persian wars.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Carey (1981) 206.

<sup>31</sup> Another allusion to Peleus' surpassing *ωφροσύνη* is *Pl. R.* 391c2.

<sup>32</sup> Köhnken (1975) has suggested that Nicocles may well have been a victim in the Persian wars. But Pindar does not tell us so, and it is strange that, if the similarity between Nicocles and Achilles is actually even greater than it now seems, the poet should have failed to exploit this. See Carey (1981) 186-7.

Something similar seems to be the case with *Paean VI* (Maehler), once again a poem that shows a link to Aegina.<sup>33</sup> In line 144, another member of the house of Aeacus is called *σωφρο]νέστατον*. This time, it is most likely to be Aeacus himself, and it may well be his capacity for settling disputes that is envisaged here, especially in view of the reference to the *στυγὸς ὄρκιον* (155) and the verb *δικάσαι* (156). The lacunae in this context do not allow us to infer more, but taken together the two poems seem to suggest that, if the poet repeatedly addressed the *σωφροσύνη* of the Aeacids, the term must have been important for the members of the historical Aeginetan elite.

Where Bacchylides stresses the importance of *σάφρων* *Εὐνομία* for the Aeginetans, Pindar does the same in connection with the Thebans, at the close of the fragmentary first *Paean*:

πρὶν ὀδυνηρὰ γήραος ς[... μ]ολεῖν,  
 πρὶν τις εὐθυμίαι κιαζέτω  
 νόημ' ἄκοτον ἐπὶ μέτρα, ἰδὼν  
 [—]δύναμιν οἰκόθετον.  
 ἰ]ὴ ἰή. νῦν ὁ παντελής Ἑνιαυτός  
 ὦρα[ί] τε Θεμίγονοι  
 πλάξ]ιππον ἄστυ Θήβας ἐπῆλθον  
 Ἀπόλ]λωνι δαῖτα φιλησιστέφανον ἄγοντες·  
 Παιά]ν δὲ λαῶν γενεὰν δαρὸν ἐρέπτοι  
 σῶ]φρονος ἀνθεσιν εὐνομίας.  
 (Pi. Pa. 1.5-10)

Before the painful .. of old age come near, let a man first put in the shadow of happiness his mind, free of anger, in due measure, if he sees the supply stored in his home.

Iê, Iê, now the completed Year and the Seasons, born of Themis, have come to the horse-driving city of Thebes, bringing a garland-accompanied meal to Apollo. Long may Paian crown the offspring of its people with the flowers of *σάφρων* *εὐνομία*.

<sup>33</sup> This is explicitly the case for the third triad, subtitled *Αἰγ[ι]νήτα]ις | εἰ]ς Αἰα[κόν] | ]πρὸς[ό]διον*. It is not clear how this section relates exactly to the first two triads (partly lost), which are said to be composed 'for the Delphinians in honour of Pytho' (*Δελφοῖς εἰς Πυθώ*). The second of these seems relevant to Aegina as well, since it recounts the deeds and death of two great Aeacids, Achilles and Neoptolemus. For a full discussion of this problem, see now Rutherford (2001) 298-338.

The context here suggests an annual (*ἐνιαυτός, ὥραι*) festival connected with the time of harvest (4, *δύναμιν οἰκόθετον*) and the image of the ‘flowers’ of *εὐνομία* stresses the idea of fertility and productivity. The context suggests peace and serenity rather than discord and danger; there are no dark shadows here, except for the happiness that eases the mind like a protecting shadow.

Unfortunately, we do not have a date for the poem, but here again, we seem to have a reflection of the cares of an aristocratic regime under pressure both on account of inner-political tensions and the threat of a strong democratic neighbour, Athens.<sup>34</sup> Something of the same tension is felt in *Paian IX* Maehler, again composed for Thebes, where the poet addresses the sun and asks for the reason of its recent eclipse (the date may be that of the partial eclipse of 17 February 478, or perhaps more probably the complete eclipse of 30 April 463<sup>35</sup>), and includes war (*πολέμοιο ... τινός*, 13) and civil strife (15, *στάειν οὐλομέναν*) among the catastrophes that such an eclipse may portend for the city. Later on, in the mythological part of the same poem, we are told that Thebes was entrusted by Apollo to the care of Tenerus, *ἀνορέας ... ἑκατι καόφρονος* (9.52), on account of his *saophron* manliness. Tenerus is thus a mythological model ruler of Thebes, and seems to be the paradigm for the oligarchs of the present, just as the sons of Aeacus were for the Aeginetans. Moreover, he exhibits much the same qualities as the Aeacids did, combining the *ἀνορέα* of the heroic warrior with the *σαοφροσύνη* characteristic of the self-presentation of a conservative and ‘moderate’ aristocratic regime.

The theme of *στάειν* threatening the stability of the good aristocratic hegemony is relevant to yet another fragment of a Theban poem, Partheneion fr. 94, where the family of Aeoladas is said to have incurred ‘hateful strife’ (*ἐχθρὰν [ἔ]ριν*) on account of their *κώφρων* care for the city (62, *ἔνε[κε]ν μερίμνας κώφρονος*).

<sup>34</sup> For a description of the fragmentary evidence on the history of Thebes after the Persian Wars, and on the conflict with Athens leading up to a decade of Athenian hegemony in Boiotia after the battle of Oinophyta in 457 BC, see Demand (1982), 27-35.

<sup>35</sup> See Boll (1909), 2354-5, Rutherford (2001), 192.



Thus, the fragmentary evidence from Pindar and Bacchylides offers essentially the same picture of political *σωφροσύνη* as the poems of the *Corpus Theognideum*: *σωφροσύνη* is a quality both of the 'good' aristocratic leaders who refrain from injustice against their subjects, and of those citizens who acquiesce in the status quo and refrain from *στάσις*. This political use of *σωφροσύνη* clearly reflects the interests of an elite under pressure, intent on preserving the existing social order. All of these poems do indeed betray a distinctly 'aristocratic' bias. It can hardly be a coincidence that the rhetoric of *καόφρων ἐννομία* figures prominently in poems composed for aristocratic regimes, and plays no role, for instance, in Pindar's extensive and very different propaganda for the tyrants of Syracuse. *σωφροσύνη* thus emerges as a slogan in praise of moderate oligarchy. As we will see in chapter 7 (Thucydides), it is still used in this way near the end of the fifth century, although Thucydides' treatment suggests that this use of the terms as a political slogan has become increasingly problematic.

### 3. *σωφροσύνη* in Private Life

The emergence of *σωφροσύνη* as an oligarchic value in the poems of Theognis, Pindar and Bacchylides, is perhaps the most striking use of the term in archaic poetry. In other poems, however, we also have some glimpses of *σωφροσύνη* in the private life of the individual citizen. Here, we meet important early occurrences of a number of uses that will be much more prominent in the literature of the classical period.<sup>36</sup>

In the sympotic love poetry from the *Corpus Theognideum*, *σωφροσύνη* is invoked a single time, in a prayer to Aphrodite for

<sup>36</sup> I do not take account of the amusing poem Archilochos 328 West, in which a decent life (*βίου καόφρονος*, 17) is contrasted to the wanton minds of the whore and the man who plays the passive role in sex (*καταπύγων*). This has been shown to be a falsification, probably from the early sixteenth century, by someone who had made thorough enquiries into the obscene vocabulary of both Aristophanes and Hesychius; see Tarditi (1961), 311-6. Finally, in Hipponax fr. 63.2, the sage Musôn (see Diog. Laert. 1.106-108) is said to be proclaimed by Apollo to be an *ἀνδρα σωφρονέστατον*.

relief from pains and woes of love, and the restoration of the happiness that belongs to the symposium:

Κυπρογενές<sup>37</sup>, παῦσόν με πόνων, κέεδαον δὲ μερίμνας  
 θυμοβόρους, στρέψον δ' αὖθις ἐς εὐφροσύνας  
 μερμήρας δ' ἀπόπαυε κακάς, δὸς δ' εὐφροني θυμῶι  
 μέτρ' ἥβης τελέσαντ' ἔργματα σωφροσύνης.  
 (1323-6)

Cyprus-born, stop me from my woes, dispel the worries that eat away my *thymos*, and restore me to cheerfulness again; put an end to my bad troubles, and kind-heartedly<sup>38</sup> grant me, when I have reached the full measure of maturity, the deeds of *σωφροσύνη*.

Here, *σωφροσύνη* is the 'quiet' or 'untroubled' state of mind that results from the absence of over-powering desire. This approaches the standard conception of *σωφροσύνη* as 'control of desires', though unlike most later occurrences, the present passage adopts the lover's point of view rather than that of those around him, and love is conceived as a source of distress rather than as a potential source of unacceptable behaviour: it is a source of distress and deflects from the joys of the symposium (*εὐφροσύνας*, 1324). There is a connection here between *σωφροσύνη* and maturity that is a standard phrase of popular morality: while *σωφροσύνη* is consistently demanded from the young,<sup>39</sup> it is a commonplace observation that it is often only achieved with old age.

As is to be expected in a collection of poetry related to the symposium, drinking too is an important theme in the *Corpus Theognideum*, and there is a number of poems that warn us about the liabilities of excessive drinking. A good example is the poem

<sup>37</sup> The mss. read *Κυπρογένη*, an aeolic vocative that elsewhere occurs only in Alcaeus fr. 269b.1. Bekker was undoubtedly right to make the change here.

<sup>38</sup> *εὐφροني θυμῶι* here refers to the kindness ('a mind thinking good thoughts') with which the god grants her gifts, not to the cheerfulness with which the worshiper accepts the gift, cf. *AP Epigr. Dedic.* 229.5 ἀλλ' ἵλαος, ὦναξ, Ζωοῖς γένος εὐφροني θυμῶι | cῶζε.

<sup>39</sup> After the examples of Telemachus and Apollo in chapter 2, *σωφροσύνη* as a special virtue of the good son is mentioned in an epigram by Simonides (fr. 513.4), where a dying son tells his father that the latter will never forget to long for his son's ἀρετή and *σωφροσύνη*.

467-496,<sup>40</sup> where the speaker, after announcing his departure, dwells extensively on the improprieties of excessive drinking:

ὅς δ' ἂν ὑπερβάλλῃ πόσιος μέτρον, οὐκέτι κείνος  
τῆς αὐτοῦ γλώσσης καρτερὸς οὐδὲ νόον·  
μυθεῖται δ' ἀπάλαμνα, τὰ νήφοι γίνεται αἰσχρά,  
αἰδεῖται δ' ἔρδων οὐδέν, ὅταν μεθύῃ,  
τὸ πρὶν ἔων σώφρων, τότε νήπιος. ἀλλὰ σὺ ταῦτα  
γινώσκων μὴ πῖν' οἶνον ὑπερβολάδην.  
(479-487)

But whoever exceeds the measure of drinking is no longer in control of his own tongue and mind. He speaks inconsiderate things<sup>41</sup> that to sober men are disgraceful, and he does not feel shame at doing anything when he is drunk, being σώφρων before, but now a fool. You must recognise this and not drink wine to excess.

The point here is not that excessive drinking is unhealthy *per se*, or that 'a σώφρων man' will always be a moderate drinker, but rather that a man who normally *is* σώφρων will temporarily lose that quality when drunk: the drunkard will say disgraceful things (αἰσχρά) and do anything without feeling αἰδώς. In short, he will not be σώφρων anymore, but a fool, νήπιος. Apparently that is why the poet argues against compulsive drinking (πάν γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον χρῆμ' ἀνιηρὸν ἔφν, 'for any sort of compulsion is disagreeable', 472), which seems to have been the norm at the symposion.<sup>42</sup>

The same thought is stated more crudely in the couplet 497-8:

ἄφρονος ἀνδρὸς ὁμῶς καὶ σώφρονος οἶνος, ὅταν δῇ  
πίνῃ ὑπὲρ μέτρον, κοῦφον ἔθηκε νόον.  
(497-8)

Of a man who is ἄφρων and one who is σώφρων alike, wine makes the mind light, when he drinks to excess.

<sup>40</sup> Line 472, πάν γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον χρῆμ' ἀνιηρὸν ἔφν, closely resembles citations from Euenus by Aristotle (*Met.* 1015a28, *EE* 1223a31, *Rhet.* 1370a10, with πρᾶγμ' instead of χρῆμ') and Plutarchus (*Non posse suaviter vivi*, 1102c, πάν γὰρ ἀναγκαῖον πρᾶγμ' ὀδυνηρὸν ἔφν). This of course does not amount to proof that the present poem is by Euenus; see Van Groningen (1966), 198.

<sup>41</sup> For ἀπάλαμνα, see Van Groningen ad v. 281.

<sup>42</sup> Thus, in Pl. *Smp.* 176a5-e6, many words are spent to establish that at that particular party, the day after a heavy night, there should be *no* compulsion to drink more than one wants. Evidently, absence of compulsion was hardly the norm.

Here again the point is not that the *νώφρων* will always refrain from excessive drinking, but that excessive drinking leads to a 'light mind', and thus apparently to unacceptable behaviour, both from one who normally *is* *νώφρων* and *does* know how to behave, and from his *ἄφρων* foil who does not how to behave anyway.<sup>43</sup>

If *σωφροσύνη* emerges as control of desire, and as a check on unacceptable behaviour, in songs from the symposium, it can also manifest itself on occasion as a control of fear. In the seventh of the so-called Homeric Hymns (*To Dionysus*), the pilot of the pirates' ship is credited with a *καόφρων* *thymos* (*h. Bacch.* 49 *κυβερνήτην ... καόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχοντα*) on the ground that he remains calm and unperturbed when the god reveals himself, while the rest of the crew flees around him in panic. It is suggested that he also shows *σωφροσύνη* in another respect, for he alone recognises the divine status of Dionysus (15 *νοήσας*) and tries to keep his fellow pirates from taking him captive. Thus, the use of the term *καόφρων* reflects both his lack of fear and his respect for the god.

The Homeric hymn *To Dionysus*, then, hints that the *νώφρων* will refrain, and dissuade others, from offending the gods. The thought is expressed more directly by Pindar (*P.* 3.63) in a consolatory poem for the ailing Hiero of Syracuse.<sup>44</sup> The poet here expresses the wish that *νώφρων* ... *Χίρων* might be still alive to produce a second healer, and one who — unlike his predecessor Asclepius — would refrain from breaking into the realm of the divine by bringing back the dead from Hades. Here, then, the 'wisdom' of master Chiron is contrasted with his pupil's desire to achieve the impossible and ignore the limits of mortality (and, as it seems, Hiero is subtly persuaded to accept the inevitable).

These clashes between the humane and the divine are, of course, the stuff of mythology, and the link between *σωφροσύνη* and the idea that one should not offend the gods is especially

<sup>43</sup> Similar standards of propriety apply in a poetic *sententia* by Phocylides, who states that 'many men seem to be *νώφρονες* if they walk in an orderly fashion (*ὅν κόσμῳι στείχοντες*), whereas they are really light-minded (*ἐλαφρόν(ο)οί περ ἑόντες*). This seems close to the 'boyish' good manners extolled by the 'Stronger' *Λόγος* from *Clouds*, and offered as a first attempt at the definition of *σωφροσύνη* by Charmides in the dialogue of the same name.

<sup>44</sup> See Burton (1962), 78.

prominent in Attic drama, notably Aeschylus. It is hardly, on the other hand, a typical manifestation of *σωφροσύνη* in every day private life. To return to this sphere, then, the *σωφροσύνη* of the ordinary male citizen does not only manifest itself negatively, in the control — or absence — of affects and undesirable types of behaviour. It also manifests itself more positively in prudent administration of one's *oikos*. One of the main problems connected with this issue is of course finding a suitable wife; accordingly, a fragment of Hipponax (182) states that for a *σώφρων* man, it is best to find a wife of good character (*τρόπον γυναικὸς χρηστὸν*), 'for this is the only dowry that saves his house' (*αὕτη γὰρ ἡ προῖξ οἰκίαν σώζει μόνη*, fr. 182.1-3).

From the male point of view, the main concern about a wife seems to be how she deals with her husband and his estate. In this connection, *σωφροσύνη* is the virtue *par excellence* of the 'good wife'. In a diatribe against women, the poet Semonides (fr. 7 W.) offers a seemingly exhausting list of all that can go wrong. The poem starts with a catalogue of ten different types of women, each taking after an animal or a natural phenomenon and including only a single 'good' type. The catalogue includes the dirty swine, the cunning fox, the curious and insolent dog, the greedy earth, the changeable sea, the stubborn and sexually insatiable donkey, the thievish weasel, the vain horse, the ugly and shameless monkey, and — at the end of this rather depressing list — the bee who takes good care of one's estate (85 *θάλλει δ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς καπαέξεται βίος*), begets a decent and respected offspring (*τεκοῦσα καλὸν κῶνομάκλυτον γένος*, 87) and does not enjoy sitting with other women and talking about sex (91). The poet then reverts to the observation that all other women are the biggest evil wrought by Zeus, and adds that if a woman seemingly fails to exhibit the bad ways summed up in the first part of the poem, this is hardly a sign of her excellence, but rather of the blindness of men to the faults of their own wives:

ἥτις δέ τοι μάλιστα σωφρονεῖν δοκεῖ,  
αὕτη μέγιστα τυγχάνει λωβωμένη.  
κεχρηνότες γὰρ ἄνδρες, οἱ δὲ γείτονες  
χαίρουσ' ὀρώντες καὶ τόν, ὥς ἁμαρτάνει.  
τὴν ἣν δ' ἕκαστος αἰνέσει μεμνημένος

γυναῖκα, τὴν δὲ τοῦτέρου μωμήσεται·  
(Semonides fr. 7 W., 108-9)

And she whom you may think is utterly *sophron*, she happens to act most outrageously. The man gapes in admiration, but the neighbours are happy to see that he as well is mistaken. Everyone will praise his own wife when mentioning her, and he will blame the other's.

The catalogue at the beginning of the poem is one of the most extensive enumerations of female 'sins' and gives the fullest picture of what the truly *νώφρων* wife will *not* do.<sup>45</sup> As in many passages in classical literature, loyalty and inconspicuous behaviour are indeed the most salient features of the *νώφρων* wife. But there are also a few hints that being a *νώφρων* woman does not just entail the avoidance of a myriad of vices, but also includes a few more positive aspects: the bee-like type of woman turns out to be a good house-keeper, under whose influence a man's estate flourishes, and who bears him a decent number of good children.

#### 4 Conclusion

In what we have of archaic poetry, *νώφρων* and cognates are not exactly frequent, but some occurrences of the terms are highly informative and very significant. (For a diagram that tries to visualise the network connections between these uses, see Fig. 4 in Chapter 9.3.) Most important of all, no doubt, is the use of the terms in political contexts in Theognis, Pindar and Bacchylides. *νωφροσύνη* here belongs to the language of an aristocratic elite who wish to maintain the existing social order. In this context, *νωφροσύνη* is something of a two-sided affair: on the one hand, it is the quality of the citizens who refrain from revolt and avoid *στάσις*, on the other hand, it is recognised, especially in the poems of the *Theognidea*, that those in power must also be *νώφρονες*

<sup>45</sup> According to Verdenius (1968), 154 *νωφροεῖν* here is used 'besonders in erotischer Hinsicht'; he cites A. Cho. 182, S. Fr. 682.2, E. Ba 314, IA 1159, Arist. Pol. 1263b9. But here the context does not allow us to narrow down the reference of *νωφροεῖν*. It signals the wife's avoidance of, or rather the husband's inability to perceive, the typical vices of all nine types of bad women.

and refrain from injustice against their fellow citizens: thus, we see how our terms are used to commend ‘restraint of injustice’, and *εὐνομία* or ‘restraint of civil strife’.

This association of *σωφροσύνη* and aristocratic politics is firmly established by the end of the archaic period. In Attic drama (chapters 4–6), it is criticised from a democratic point of view. By contrast, we will see that in Thucydides (chapter 7), *σωφροσύνη* is frequently used as a positive characterisation not only of types of government that distinguish themselves from Athens’s radical democracy, notably Sparta, but also of the politics of the oligarchic coup of 411 in Athens itself. Plato’s *Charmides* (chapter 10) similarly addresses these oligarchic connotations of *σωφροσύνη* by confronting Socrates with two representatives of the oligarchic movement of the Thirty.

Otherwise, archaic poetry offers some comparatively early encounters with various types of *σώφρονες* that are familiar figures from classical literature. Thus, *σωφροσύνη* is used to commend ‘control of desire’ (and of shameful behaviour) and as well as ‘quietness’ and control of fear, and also the ‘prudence’ of the man who takes good care of his estate. Besides, *σωφροσύνη* is the quality of the (really or supposedly) ‘good wife’, who is not found guilty of those many vices to which Greek women were always believed to be incurably inclined.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### AESCHYLUS

#### 1. *Introduction*

In the last chapter on archaic poetry, we have seen how *σωφροσύνη* was used to commend 'justice' and 'εὐνομία' and functioned as a slogan of political elites intent on the preservation of the status quo and the avoidance of civil strife. The tragedies of Aeschylus also focus to a large extent on war and violence, but they address these topics in an entirely different setting and from a markedly different point of view. Tragedy generally does not leave much room for overt political propaganda, but *Eumenides* provides one notable exception, and the play suggests that the solution to the sequence of murder and retribution witnessed in *Agamemnon* and *Choephoroi* lies with the courts of democratic Athens, whose citizens are *σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ*, 'for a long time to come' (A. *Eum.* 1000).

Given the prominence of the themes of war and violence, *σωφροσύνη* is frequently invoked in praise of those who refrain from undue aggression (section 2). In *Seven Against Thebes*, which focuses on the civil war between the sons of Oedipus, the Thebans use the term *σωφροσύνη* in praise of Amphiaraus, who tries to temper the aggression of his six fellow-warriors. *σωφροσύνη* also plays a role in the propaganda on the shield of Polynices, who of course claims to have justice on his side and denies that he is an aggressor. Violence on a more intimate, but no less threatening, scale, the sequence of killings in the house of Atreus, is the main theme of the *Oresteia*. Throughout the trilogy, *σωφροσύνη* is invoked in connection with the thought that such violence should be stopped (Ag. 181, 351, *Cho.* 140, *Eum.* 521; by contrast, at *Eum.* 136 Clytemnestra's ghost strikingly, but characteristically, appeals to the 'good sense' of the Erinyes when she incites them to continue the pursuit of Orestes). The impact of this 'lesson to mankind' is finally learned only by the Athenians.

In all these plays, there are strong religious overtones, and Aeschylus is a main source for the idea that the *σώφρων* will re-



frain from offending the gods. Thus, in *Seven Against Thebes*, the lack of ostentation of the *ᾠφρων* Amphiaraus is contrasted to the boastful and impious claims of most of his fellow warriors, and the killings in *Oresteia* are said to ignore Zeus' lesson to mankind.

On the side of the victims of aggression (section 3), *ωφροσύνη* consists in an appropriate response to the distress of imminent warfare, and takes the character of a quiet and controlled response to fear. Women especially are urged to keep quiet in distressful situations, and show *ωφροσύνη*. Thus, *ωφροσύνη* is invoked in condemnation of the fearful cries of the Theban women (*Th.* 186) by Eteocles, who at that stage of the play still manages to keep up his calm resolve. The case of the Danaids in *Supplices* is more complicated. Danaus keeps trying to temper his daughters' excitable responses to the various distressful situations in which they find themselves (*Supp.* 198, 710, 724, 992), but there are clear hints that the girls are likely to turn from victims into aggressors themselves, and that their father's injunctions will not meet with enduring success.

Finally, some Aeschylean characters who refer to *ωφροσύνη* show a strongly developed sense of hierarchy (section 4); to them, *ωφροσύνη* is the prerequisite of the socially inferior, who should avoid offending their superiors by obeying and shutting up. Authoritarian figures like Clytemnestra and Aegisthus in *Agamemnon*, and Hermes in *PV*, do not accept being contradicted by their supposed inferiors (the chorus of Argives, Prometheus). From their mouths, the injunction to be *ᾠφρων* amounts to an order to obey and keep quiet (*Ag.* 1425, 1620, 1664, *PV* 982). The passages in *Agamemnon* are especially telling, because there is an implicit but unmistakable contrast between this *ωφροσύνη* of submissive acquiescence as demanded by the authorities in Argos (the old men of Argos are not allowed to speak out against the crimes committed by Clytemnestra and Aegisthus) and the rather more 'democratic' *ωφροσύνη* of the Athenian citizens (*Eum.* 1000), who, by acquitting Orestes, put an end to violence and reinstate peace and stability. Thus, *Eumenides* provides a rare but striking use of *ωφροσύνη* in an unequivocal piece of democratic, pro-Athenian propaganda.

In what follows, no account is taken of *Persians*, a play that is often regarded as the illustration *par excellence* of the Aeschylean conflict between ὕβρις and σωφροσύνη, but in which the terms are not used except<sup>1</sup> in a single corrupt passage in the speech of the ghost of Darius. Of course, there is no doubt, at least in the view of Darius, that Xerxes' decision to yoke the Bosphoros and

<sup>1</sup> A. Pers. 829-31, πρὸς ταῦτ' ἐκείνον †σωφρονεῖν κεχρημένοι† | πινύσκει' εὐλόγοις νοουθετήμασιν, | λῆξαι θεοβλαβοῦνθ' ὑπερκόμπωι θράσει. ('In view of this, ... you must make him sensible by means of well-considered advice, to stop from doing harm to the gods with over-boastful audacity.') Commentators have despaired over the phrase σωφρονεῖν κεχρημένοι from the author of the Byzantine paraphrase (Φ in West) onwards: πρὸς ταῦτα ὑμεῖς οἱ κεχρημένοι τῇ σωφροσύνῃ, ἢ οἱ χρήζοντες καὶ οἱ θέλοντες σωφρονεῖν, πινύσκετε καὶ συνετίζετε καὶ σωφρονίζετε ἐκείνον, τὸν Ξέρξην, ἐν συνετοῖς νοουθετήμασιν, ὥστε λῆξαι καὶ παύσασθαι θεοβλαβοῦντα καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῶν θεῶν βλάβην πάσχοντα διὰ τῆς κευδοξίας. ἢ κεχρημένον αὐτὸ τοῦ χρεῖαν ἔχοντα καὶ ἄξιον ὄντα σωφρονεῖν. ('In view of this, you, who make use of your *sôphrosunê*, or who are willing and prepared to be *sôphrones*, should make him, Xerxes, sensible, shrewd and cōphron, by means of perceptive advice, in order that he may stop harming the gods and suffering harm from the gods on account of his idle opinions. Or else, read κεχρημένον, which means 'to be in need of being cōphron' and 'to be expected to be cōphron'.')

κεχρημένοι can mean 'making use of', 'having at one's disposal' (as in *Od.* 3.266, 14.421, 16.398 φρεὶ γὰρ κέχρητ' ἀγαθήϊσι); in this sense, the verb requires a complement in the dative. Stewart's conjecture τῷ φρονεῖν κεχρημένοι (*CR* N.S. 11 (1961), 107), 'making use of your good sense', meets this requirement, and yields acceptable sense. (It corresponds to the first paraphrase in Φ.) For a parallel for τὸ φρονεῖν without any specification, see *E. Ba.* 389ff. ὁ δὲ τὰς ἡσυχίας | βίोटος καὶ τὸ φρονεῖν | ἀκάλευτόν τε μένει καὶ | ξυνέχει δώματα. As Diggle's apparatus signals, at *Chr. Pat.* 1803, the expression is 'normalised': τό τε φρονεῖν εὖ σωφρονεῖν τ' ἐν τῷ βίῳ | τηρεῖ τὰ πάνθ', ὡς ἀκάλευτα προσμένειν.

The participle can of course also mean 'being in need of'. It then requires a complement in the genitive. One should then *both* adopt the *varia lectio* κεχρημένον (it is not the chorus but Xerxes who is 'in need of good sense') and introduce a genitive of some kind (e.g. Broadhead's ὡς φρενῶν κεχρημένον or Butler's τοῦ φρονεῖν κεχρημένον). This is less likely altogether.

There is no parallel to support the Byzantine commentator's suggestion that σωφρονεῖν κεχρημένοι may mean χρήζοντες ... σωφρονεῖν, or West's suggestion that ἐκείνον σωφρονεῖν κεχρημένοι may mean 'beseeching him to be sensible'.

Others take the phrase σωφρονεῖν κεχρημένον to mean 'it having been declared that one should be sensible' (Broadhead), citing *Ag.* 1620 σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον ('while it has been said that you should be cōphrones') in support. The source of the declaration is then supposed to be the oracle mentioned by Darius at 739f. and 801. This, however, is an unusual interpretation of κεχρημένον, and the verb would have to be followed either by a declaration of what was about to happen, or a rather more practical instruction as to what to do: σωφρονεῖν will hardly fit as the content of the instruction of an oracle.

So on balance, one should either adopt Stewart's τῷ φρονεῖν κεχρημένοι, or obelise the phrase.

burn the temples of the gods on his way to conquering Hellas, was taken rashly (744, *νέωι θράσει*) and ill-consideredly (749, *οὐκ εὐβουλίαι*), and that the king was not in his right mind to offend the gods in this way.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, Xerxes is the historical counterpart to the mythical aggressors of *Seven Against Thebes*. But the words *ώφρων* and cognates are not used except perhaps in that single corrupt passage where Darius tells the chorus to teach Xerxes some good sense,<sup>3</sup> and in fact most of the action of the play tends to focus on the misery of the Persians rather than the mentality of their king.

## 2. *Restraint of Violence and Respect for the Gods:* *Seven Against Thebes, Oresteia*

*Seven Against Thebes* deals with the prospect of imminent civil war from the perspective of the besieged city. Much attention is focused on the aggression of the attackers. Perhaps one should assume that Polynices has a claim of his own and that Eteocles is at least partly responsible for the conflict with his brother,<sup>4</sup> but

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 725 ὥστε μὴ φρονεῖν καλῶς, 750 τὰδ' οὐ νόκος φρενῶν, 782 νέος ἐὼν νέα φρονεῖ, 808 ἀθέων φρονημάτων, 820 οὐχ ὑπέρφεν θνητὸν ὄντα χρή φρονεῖν, 827f. τῶν ὑπερκόμπων ἄγαν | φρονημάτων.

Similarly, the opposition between Persian ὕβρις and Greek σωφροσύνη that many read in the text of *Persians* (e.g. North (1966) 33, 'Aeschylus draws in Xerxes a paradigm of ὕβρις and makes an unequivocal contrast between the barbarians whom he represents and the Greeks whose triumph at Salamis and Plataea is due to their possession of the virtues that their enemies lack.') remains largely implicit. Of course it is true that Xerxes is a hybristic figure, but the play contains little comment on the Greeks. When these are praised by some of the Persian speakers in the play, it is not for their σωφροσύνη, but rather for their courage (e.g. 1024f. Ἰάνων λαὸς οὐ φυγαίχμας. - ἄγαν ἄρειος, cf. 349) and their martial skills which the Persians find very surprising in view of the 'democratic' organisation of the Greek forces (241-4).

This is difficult to decide on the basis of the text of *Septem*, in which the events are seen through the eyes of the besieged Thebans alone. As for Polynices, it appears that he thinks he has δίκη on his side (cf. 644-8), though the seer Amphiaraus warns him that no δίκη is strong enough to warrant an attack against one's native city (cf. 584). Eteocles' position and responsibility are not discussed at all. It seems probable that in the lost earlier plays in the trilogy, the poet gave more information on how the conflict between the two brothers is to be assessed; in any case, one should not accept Eteocles' views on these matters uncritically, cf. Gagarin (1976) 120-5. Therefore, it is puzzling to read that North (1966), 39, judges Eteocles 'completely *sôphrôn*', at least until

the exclusively Theban characters in the play do not acknowledge any such claim. By contrast, much is made of the boastfulness and violence of most of the warriors around Polynices, nowhere more so than in the long scene where the scout describes each of them, and the excessive signs and claims on their shields, to Eteocles.

The first five Argive warriors are, all in a roughly similar fashion, described as a god-defying bunch of hooligans. First and foremost among them is Tydeus, conspicuous for his animal-like (391) aggression, his madly raging thirst for blood (380, 391, ἀλύων) and the 'over-bold sign' (387, ὑπέρφρον ῥήμ') on his shield. Even worse, if possible, is Capaneus, who defies the gods by his claim that he will sack the city whether the god accepts it or not (427f., θεοῦ τε γὰρ θέλοντος ἐκπέρσειν πόλιν καὶ μὴ θέλοντός φησιν) and has a picture on his shield accompanied by the text 'I will set fire to the city' (πρήσω πόλιν, 434). The third man, Eteocles, adds to all this the impious claim that not even Ares can throw him off the city-walls (469). Hippomedon carries an image of Typhon on his shield (493). With Parthenopaeus, finally, the insulting behaviour of these five reaches a climax: he claims that he will sack the city of Cadmus against Zeus' will (531f. ἡ μὲν λαπάξειν ἄστυ Καδμείων βίαι | Διός) and, to insult the Thebans, carries the image of the sphinx (541) on his shield.

The seer Amphiaraus makes for the greatest possible contrast to the excessive violence and boastfulness of these five fellow-warriors, and the scout introduces him by calling him an ἄνδρα σωφρονέστατον (568) and mentioning that he really *is* a good warrior (569, ἄλκην ἄριστον μάντιν, Ἀμφιάρεω βίαν) rather than a mere aggressor. Unlike his fellows, Amphiaraus has the courage to speak up against Tydeus (570-5), and he warns Polynices that the expedition will bring him neither *philia* from the gods (580), nor good fame with posterity (581), nor, even if he will be successful, co-operation from the present citizens of Thebes (585-6): whatever Polynices' claims may be, no right (δίκη, 584) will ever justify an expedition against one's native city. On top of

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the Erinyes strikes him and he becomes possessed by the frenzy of war. His harsh treatment of the Theban women (*Th.* 186) shows that he is not blameless. He may be rational and calm, but he is irascible and authoritarian as well.

all this, and in contrast to the ostentation of his colleagues, Amphiaraus has no sign on his shield, and the scout explains this by pointing out that the seer does not want to *seem* the best, but *be* the best (591-2).

The scout's positive evaluation of Amphiaraus' restraint is echoed by Eteocles, who laments the fact that good men have to suffer for the crimes of their fellows, and that Amphiaraus, a *σώφρων δίκαιος ἀγαθὸς εὐσεβὴς ἀνὴρ* (610), will, because of his association with unscrupulous men (*ἀνοσίοισι κυμμιγεῖς θραυστόμοισιν ἀνδράσιν*, 611-2), be 'dragged down' (*ξυγκαθελκυθήσεται*, 614) with them.

The enumeration *σώφρων δίκαιος ἀγαθὸς εὐσεβὴς* has often been taken as an allusion (the second in extant Greek after Pi. N. 74-75) to a canon of four 'cardinal' virtues.<sup>5</sup> In fact there is no good evidence that anything like a fixed canon of virtues did exist before, or even in Plato,<sup>6</sup> but in any case the point of the present enumeration is not so much that Amphiaraus possesses all possible virtues, but rather that he fails to exhibit the specific vices for which his colleagues are conspicuous, and the adjectives are a pointed summary of his behaviour as narrated by the scout. His opposition to the unrestrained violence of Tydeus (*σωφροσύνη*), his admonition that no claim is strong enough to justify an expedition against one's native city (*δικαιοσύνη*), his status as a truly brave warrior who wants *be* rather than to *seem* best (*ἀρετή*), and his refusal to make any boastful, god-defying claims (*εὐσέβεια*), all this sets him apart from his colleagues, and the enumeration serves to drive home the differences.

In contrast to both the boundless aggression pictured on the shields of the five Argive hooligans and the emphatic lack of ostentation on Amphiaraus' part, the emblem on the shield of Polynices is a careful piece of propaganda:

χρυσήλατον γὰρ ἄνδρα τευχεστὴν ἰδεῖν  
 ἄγει γυνή τις σωφρόνως ἡγουμένη  
 Δίκη δ' ἄρ' εἶναι φησιν, ὥς τὰ γράμματα  
 λέγει· κατὰξω δ' ἄνδρα τόνδε, καὶ πόλιν

<sup>5</sup> So North (1966), 41n.18; cf. Bowra (1964), 181.

<sup>6</sup> For a full and perceptive discussion of the matter see Pfeijffer (1999), 639-42 on Pi. N. 3.74-5.

ἔξει πατρίαν δωμάτων τ' ἐπιστροφάς.  
(A. Th. 644-8)

A man of beaten gold, looking like a warrior, is led on *sôphronôs* by a woman. She claims to be Dike, as the inscription says: 'And I will bring this man back home, and he will have control over the city of his fathers and the affairs of his house'.

Polynices' claim is that the expedition against Thebes is not a matter of aggression: instead, he claims to have *Dike* on his side. The calm restraint of the figure of the goddess on his shield, conveyed by the adverb *σωφρόνως ἡγουμένη*, 'leading him on in a restrained manner' (i.e. calmly), contrasts sharply with the violent giants and monsters on the shields of some of his associates, and serves to underline his claim that he only comes to take what belongs to him anyway. From his point of view, this claim may be understandable enough, but as the passage on Amphiaraus has shown, the spectators are invited to regard any such claim as too weak to justify an attack on one's native city. From the perspective of Eteocles and the Thebans, Polynices is palpably wrong: according to Eteocles, the Dike on the shield of his brother is 'by all rights misnamed' (670 *πανδίκως ψευδώνυμος*), and the chorus says that he makes 'very bad claims' (678 *τῶι κάκιςτ' αὐδωμένωι*).

The *Oresteia* deals with violence on a different scale: a sequence of killing and retribution within the house of Atreus, beginning in the distant past with the killings of the children of Thyestes, and of Iphigenia, and continuing in the course of the trilogy with the killings of Agamemnon and Cassandra, and of Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus. Throughout the trilogy, *σωφρονεῖν* is invoked more than once in connection with the idea that it is good to abstain from (further) violence, and thus to put an end to this sequence of violence and retribution.

This complex of ideas is voiced for the first time by the chorus in the *parodos* of *Agamemnon*, in a passage fraught with worries about the fate that awaits Agamemnon. As they dwell on the beginnings of the expedition to Troy, they soon reach Kalchas' prophecy at Aulis (104-59). Calchas predicts Artemis' demand for the sacrifice of Iphigenia (147-50) as well as Clytemnestra's revenge for the death of her daughter (151-5), which he connects with a *μῆνις* (155) that 'waits' in the house of Atreus: ap-

parently, the seer refers in general terms to retribution for the killing of the children of Thyestes.<sup>7</sup> They then break off their narration and state that if they *really* are to dispel their worries, they can find no other authority for doing so than Zeus:

Ζεύς, ὅστις ποτ' ἐστίν, εἰ τόδ' αὖ-  
 τῶι φίλον κεκλημένωι,  
 τοῦτό νιν προσεννέπω.  
 οὐκ ἔχω προσεικάσαι  
 πάντ' ἐπισταθμώμενος  
 πλὴν Διός, εἰ τὸ μάταν ἀπὸ φροντίδος ἄχθος  
 χρὴ βαλεῖν ἐτητύμωσ.  
 (A. Ag. 160-6)

Zeus, whoever he may be, if this is the name by which he wishes to be called, this is how I address him. I cannot identify anything, throwing everything into the balance, save Zeus, if I must really cast away the fruitless anguish from my thoughts.

Zeus, they claim, if 'Zeus' is indeed the appropriate name for the supreme divine power, is the only possible source of relief, if the burden which troubles their mind, their concern for Agamemnon,<sup>9</sup> is indeed vain, and if they are really to cast it off.<sup>10</sup> For

<sup>7</sup> Following Furley (1986) 109-21 and, in part, Lloyd-Jones (1962), 187-99, Käppel (1997) 86-92 convincingly argues for the meal of Thyestes as the 'cause' of Artemis' demand for the sacrifice of Iphigenia, which is otherwise not clearly motivated in the text of the *parodos* of Ag. (see *ibid.* 106-9 for illuminating schematic representations of the main interpretative positions). On Käppel's interpretation, Iphigenia's sacrifice, 'caused' by the meal of Thyestes, has in itself the double function of enabling the Greeks to conquer Troy and, more importantly for the plot of the trilogy, being a cause for the killing of Agamemnon (see *ibid.* 133).

As Smith (1980) 8-12 has shown, *προσεικάσαι* (τινά τινι) in classical times does not mean 'compare *x* to *y*', but rather 'identify an unknown *x* on the basis of its likeness to *y*'. Cf. Bollack (1981), 216 'Quant à l'acte désigné par *προσεικάσειν*, il semble qu'il ne désigne pas une simple comparaison, mais une mise en rapport devant aboutir à une identification.'

To the passages discussed by Smith, one may add A. Th. 431 τὰς δ' ἀστράπας τε καὶ κεραυνίους βολὰς | μεσημβρινοῖσι θάλπεειν προσήκαεν, 'he [Kapanus] claims that the lightning and thunder [of Zeus] are merely like the midday heat'; E. El. 559 ἡ προσεικάξει μέ τωι;, 'does he [the old servant] identify me [the as yet unrecognised Orestes] as someone?'; Rh. 696 τίνι προσεικάσω; 'With whom am I to identify [this man]?'

I here concur with Denniston-Page ad 160ff.: 'The Chorus has in mind (153ff.) the danger which impends over Agamemnon on his return.' Fraenkel *ad loc.* credits the chorus with theological concerns which seem very irrelevant to the dramatic context: 'Thus τὸ μάταν ἄχθος is the burden of the folly which induces men to believe that Zeus is not the almighty ruler, who directs all that

Zeus, they state in the antistrophe, has done away with his violent predecessors, Uranus, ‘swollen with all-fighting boldness’ (παμμάχῳ θράσει βρύων, 168), and Cronus, and has instituted a new and (it is taken) permanent regime. By putting an end to violence and strife, he has now a ‘lesson’ to impart to mankind:

τὸν φρονεῖν βροτοὺς ὁδῶ-  
 σαντα, τὸν πάθει μάθος  
 θέντα κυρίως ἔχειν.  
 στάζει δ’ ἀνθ’ ὕπνου πρὸ καρδίας  
 μνησιπήμων πόνος· καὶ παρ’ ἄ-  
 κοντας ἦλθε σωφρονεῖν.  
 δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βίαιος  
 σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων.  
 (A. Ag. 176-83).

is done among mankind.’ Smith (1980) 17-8, takes the lines to mean that ‘they have tried to explain to themselves Iphigenia’s death, but they have found no ready way to make sense of it.’ But in view of the reference to Clytemnestra’s revenge in 151-5, their worries are likely to be rather more specific.

I take it that εἰ ... χρὴ βαλεῖν ἐτητύμως signals that they very much doubt whether there is indeed a good reason to do away with their fear. The point of μάταν would then be that their fear is of no avail (cf. LSJ s.v.) rather than that there is no good reason for being afraid. (Both Fränkel and Denniston-Page take ἐτητύμως here in opposition to μάτην to mean ‘truly to cast off the vain burden of anxiety’.)

Unlike εἰ χρὴ + inf. praes., which implies that there can be no doubt that the act described by the infinitive is indeed the thing to do (‘if one is to do x, as is clear by now’), εἰ χρὴ + inf. aor. is used when it is still open to debate whether the action described by the infinitive is indeed to be done (‘if one is to do x, and not something else’).

For the inf. praes., cf. E. *Hcl.* 491 (A girl has to be sacrificed) εἰ χρὴ μὲν ἡμᾶς, χρὴ δὲ τήνδ’ εἶναι πόλιν, ‘if we, and if this city must remain (as of course is desirable).’ E. *Ba.* 207-9 οὐ γὰρ διήρηχ’ ὁ θεός, οὔτε τὸν νέον | εἰ χρὴ χορεύειν οὔτε τὸν γεραίτερον, | ἀλλ’ ἐξ ἀπάντων βούλεται τιμὰς ἔχειν. ‘For the god has singled out no-one, neither young nor old, if (as is the case) one has to dance, no, he wants to be honoured by all.’

For the inf. aor., cf. S. *Tr.* 749 εἰ χρὴ μαθεῖν σε, πάντα δὴ φωνεῖν χρεών, ‘If you must know, I obviously have to say everything.’ E. *Alc.* 110 κομίζετ’, εἰ χρὴ τήνδε δεῖσθαι δόμοις, ‘bring her in, if I must receive her in my house.’

In Ag. 165-6, the inf. aor. in combination with ἐτητύμως conveys that they very much doubt whether they really are to forget their cares. For ἐτητύμως in expressions implying disbelief, cf. A. Ag. 1296-8, εἰ δ’ ἐτητύμως | μόρον τὸν αὐτῆς οἶσθα, πῶς θεηλάτου | βοός δικήν πρὸς βωμόν εὐτόλμως πατείς; ‘If you really know your own death, why do you, in the manner of a cow driven by a god, walk to the altar unperturbedly?’; S. *El* 1452 ἢ καὶ θανόντ’ ἡγγειλαν ὡς ἐτητύμως; ‘Did they indeed bring the message that he really died?’; E. *Alk.* 1154 γυναικα λεύσσω τήν ἐμήν ἐτητύμως; ‘My wife, is it really her I see?’



(Zeus), who puts men on the path of having sense, who has laid down the rule that ‘understanding through experience’ holds good. But instead of sleep, a pain that is mindful of misery drips in the heart; even to those who do not want it good sense will come. And as to the gods, their favour may, it seems, be forceful, as they sit on their august seats.

By means of his victory over Cronus, Zeus has put an end to a cycle of strife and violence between the gods. The new ‘law’ which he has now laid down for all men is indicated here in very general terms: *φρονεῖν* ‘to have sense’, and *πάθει μάθος*, ‘learning/understanding through experience’. In this context, this much-discussed proverbial phrase<sup>12</sup> is best taken to mean that he who commits a grave error shall experience (‘suffer’) its consequences and thereby recognise his error. This may amount to no more than that the wrongdoer will be punished and suffer in return: this is what eventually happens to both Agamemnon and Clytemnestra, and this is the meaning of the more ‘nihilistic’ variations of the maxim encountered at *Ag.* 1564 *παθεῖν τὸν ἔρξαντα* and *Cho.* 313, *δράσαντα παθεῖν*. But it is at least implied here that man may learn from the *πάθη* of others and refrain from doing wrong to others before suffering himself.<sup>13</sup> This must be what is meant by *φρονεῖν* and it must be this on which the

<sup>11</sup> I follow Page and others in accepting Turnebus’ conjecture *βίαιος* for *βιαιῖος* at 182. For a radically different interpretation see Pope (1984) 100-13, and his rejection by Conacher (1976) 328-36.

See especially the extensive discussions of Smith (1980) 21-6 and Bollack (1981) 223-8.

This interpretation of *πάθει μάθος* is closer to that of Conacher (1987), 11-2 and 83-5, than to Fraenkel (1950) 113 and Denniston-Page (1957) 85, who both offer a more restricted view of Zeus’ lesson and more or less equate *πάθει μάθος* to ‘the doer shall suffer’ (*Ag.* 1564 *παθεῖν τὸν δράσαντα*, *Cho.* 313 *δράσαντα παθεῖν*). But if Zeus’ lesson of *πάθει μάθος* does indeed allow of a relatively ‘optimistic’ interpretation (Conacher (1987) 83), it seems clear that the chorus is not very optimistic about the chances for their masters.

Others, including Gagarin (1976) 139-50, Smith (1980), 26-30, Thiel (1993) 104-110 and Käppel 94n.131, relate *πάθει μάθος* to the punishment of Paris for the rape of Helen, and regard the hymn as an expression of hope for an auspicious end to the Trojan war, and therewith as essentially *unrelated* to the theme of violence and retribution in the house of Atreus. To my mind the main arguments against this view are (i) its dramatic inappropriateness in *this* part of the chorus’ narration: after Calchas’ prophecy, a prayer for a good end to the Trojan War seems impossibly evasive, and (ii) the unmistakable relevance of the violence of Zeus’ ancestors (168-72), stopped only by Zeus’ himself, to the events in the house of Atreus, stopped only by Orestes’ acquittal.

chorus found their tenuous hope: Agamemnon may not suffer after all, if Clytemnestra is prepared to take Zeus' lesson to heart and refrain from violence herself, as her present offerings of thanksgiving may seem to imply.

But the chorus' hopes do not last: their 'pain that is mindful of misery' (*μνησιπήμων πόνος*, 180) takes over. Not all are prepared to take Zeus' lesson to heart without more ado. Those who are not (*ἄκοντας*, 180-1) will have to learn to *σωφρονεῖν* (181) the hard way. To them, the 'favour' of the gods (the lesson they will have to learn) will rather be a 'forceful' one, a *χάρις βίαιος*. Though the Argive elders do not yet fully accept this as an inescapable certainty (note the force of *που*, diminishing the assertive value of the statement<sup>14</sup>), they evidently fear that their masters are among those who will learn Zeus' lesson the hard way, on the principle of *πάθει μάθος*.

*σωφρονεῖν*, then, here commends the sensible restraint of those who wisely do away with the use of violence and retribution as a means to solve internal conflicts, whether they do so willingly, or have to 'learn' this good sense through suffering. The members of the house of Atreus exemplify the latter, and the theme of their learning a hard lesson runs through the trilogy.

By contrast, the Athenian *δῆμος* in *Eumenides*, where the theme of strife in the house of Atreus is elevated to a more universal political dimension, constitutes an example of a body of men who willingly do away with this kind of violence. The institution of the Areopagus as a court to settle matters of murder and manslaughter in a 'proto-democratic' fashion, by vote, puts an end to the concatenation of killing and revenge that we have been witnessing through the course of the trilogy. It is the enduring good sense of the Athenians that the Erinyes acknowledge when they hail the Athenian people as *σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ* (*Eu.* 1000), 'showing good sense in the course of time', i.e. for a long time.<sup>15</sup> Earlier on, they believed that stronger de-

<sup>14</sup> On this interpretation, *που* qualifies the assertive value of *δαιμόνων χάρις βίαιος*, 'from the gods, there may well be a favour that is forceful'. Fraenkel, reading *βιαίως* (qualifying *τέλμα ἡμένων*), takes *που* as qualifying the assertion that the 'hard lesson' from the gods is indeed a *χάρις*; 'there is, I think, a blessing'.

*σωφρονοῦντες ἐν χρόνῳ* is usually taken as 'becoming *σώφρονες* in time' (e.g. Goldhill (1984) 277) and has puzzled critics who note that the Athenians

terrents (i.e. they themselves in their original function) were necessary to keep people from violence; they thought that ‘it is good to show restraint under constraint’, *ξυμφέρει σωφρονεῖν ὑπὸ στένει* (*ibid.* 520-1); now Athena has persuaded them that the law and the court of the Areopagus will actually be more effective.

If the gods themselves take their time to understand the implications of Zeus’ new order — in *Choephoroi*, it is Apollo himself who urges Orestes to kill his mother — it is not surprising that most of the human protagonists utterly fail to do so. For Agamemnon himself it is all too late. Naturally enough, he is unwilling at first to sacrifice his daughter, but then he sees that the sacrifice is inescapable if the expedition to Troy is to come about and he proceeds to ‘put on the yoke of the inescapable’ (218).<sup>16</sup>

Clytemnestra is even more single-mindedly determined. The first time we meet her, she claims to be worried about the safe return of the victorious army. She tells the chorus that the army may not keep from sacking the temples of the gods, that the spir-

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(unlike the Eumenides) have not gone through a perceptible change, and can hardly be described as ‘becoming *σώφρονες*’. Sommerstein *ad loc.* proposes to take *ἐν χρόνῳ* as meaning *in due time*, i.e. before suffering anything untoward’, or to take the whole phrase as meaning ‘At last do we meet with a body of men endowed with *σωφροσύνη*.’

But the inceptive interpretation of the phrase *σωφρονούντες ἐν χρόνῳ* is unwarranted. It is true that *ἐν χρόνῳ*, ‘in the course of time’, when connected with a verb indicating a punctual or a terminative action, means ‘(x happens/comes about) in the course of time’, i.e. ‘in the long run, after a long time.’ See e.g. Pi. *P.* 8.15 *βία δὲ καὶ μέγανυχον ἔσφαλεν ἐν χρόνῳ*, and cf. A. *Supp.* 138, 938, A. 857 etc. But when *ἐν χρόνῳ* is connected with a verb describing a state, a position, or a durative and/or repeated action, this means that ‘x is the case in the course of time’, i.e. ‘for a long time’. Cf. A. *Eum.* 498, *πολλὰ δ’ ἔτυμα παιδότηρῳτα | πάθεα προσμένει τοκεῦ-|εν ἐν χρόνῳ*; E. *Or.* 980, *ἕτερα δ’ ἕτερος ἀμείβεται | πῆματ’ ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῶν*; Pl. *Phdr.* 278d9, *τὸν μὴ ἔχοντα τιμώτερά ὧν συνέθηκεν ἢ ἔγραψεν ἄνω κάτω στρέφων ἐν χρόνῳ, πρὸς ἀλλήλα κολλῶν τε καὶ ἀφαιρῶν*.

Groeneboom follows Weil’s *σωφρονούντες ἔμφρονος*, *sensible φίλοι of a sensible goddess*, thus creating an unnecessary and rather mannered parallelism to *παρθένου φίλας φίλοι*.

The phrase *ἀνάγκας ἔδν λέπαδνον* seems to point to a conscious decision on Agamemnon’s part to do what he had to do anyway (double determination). Thus, it seems wrong to assume that, since *ἀνάγκη* ‘forced’ him to kill Iphigenia, he himself was not responsible. See Conacher (1987) 85-92 for a full discussion of this issue. Käppel (1997) 123-126 argues that *ἀνάγκας ἔδν λέπαδνον* relates *only* to Agamemnon’s acceptance of his present ‘*Zwangslage*’, not of his future ‘fate’ and death.

its of the dead may be turned against them, or that something altogether unexpected may happen to endanger their home-coming. For these sensible words, she is duly praised by the chorus: 'Madam, you are speaking sensibly like a man of sensible restraint' (γύναι, κατ' ἄνδρα σώφρων' εὐφρόνως λέγεις, 351). The 'good sense' which Clytemnestra appears to be showing here is in fact exactly the kind of good sense that, in *Persians*, Xerxes lacked, and close kin to the good sense of Amphiaras in *Seven Against Thebes*: she seems to be aware that one should not offend the gods. But of course there is a touch of dramatic irony in this assessment: the spectators know only too well that, on account of her liaison with Aegisthus, Clytemnestra is in fact a prototypical example of a woman who is *not* σώφρων. And on the basis of their knowledge of the myth, the spectators also have a very good reason to assume that she will indeed act 'like a man' (cf. the reference early in the play to her ἀνδρόβουλον κέαρ, line 11), not in the sense of showing anything like the good sense that is associated here with the male gender, but in the sense of assisting Aegisthus in killing her husband.

Thus, it is no surprise that near the start of *Choephoroi*, we overhear Electra praying to the ghost of Agamemnon that she may become much more σώφρων than her mother:

ἐλθεῖν δ' Ὀρέστην δεῦρο σὺν τύχῃ τινὶ  
κατεύχομαι σοι, καὶ σὺ κλυθί μου, πάτερ·  
αὐτῇ τέ μοι δὸς σωφρονεστέραν πολλὴν  
μητρὸς γενέσθαι χεῖρά τ' εὐσεβεστέραν.  
(A. *Cho.* 138-41)

Let Orestes come back by some stroke of good fortune, I pray thee, and I ask you to listen to me, father; and for me myself I ask you to grant me that I may become more prudent by far than my mother and more reverent in deeds.

Most commentators take σωφρονεστέραν (140) as a reference to Clytemnestra's liaison with Aegisthus, and εὐσεβεστέραν as a reference to the murder on Agamemnon.<sup>17</sup> This does indeed seem

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Garvie *ad loc.*: 'Electra is evidently thinking mainly of chastity, contrasted with Clytemnestra's adultery, while in χεῖρα εὐσεβεστέραν it is the murder of Ag. that she has in mind. There is no need to suppose (Ammendola) [=ed. 1948] that it is the thought of bloodshed that terrifies her.'; Groeneboom: 'σωφ. wijst op het overspel, εὐσ. op den moord'.

to be what Electra has in mind, though Bowen is surely right to note that, apart from some passing references in *Ag.* 856-7, 1204, 1439, 1441, and *Cho.* 916-17, Aeschylus makes 'virtually no use of sexual relations as a theme'.<sup>18</sup> But for a spectator who has kept the hymn to Zeus of *Agamemnon* in mind, there is now something more to being *σώφρων* than mere conformity to the conventional view that a wife should be faithful to her husband: it requires a fundamental change in the way one deals with conflicts within the family and the state. Clytemnestra also lacked *σωφροσύνη* in that sense, because she insisted on revenge for Iphigenia. And Electra herself is as unprepared to accept this type of *σωφροσύνη* as were Agamemnon and Clytemnestra.<sup>19</sup> While she will indeed keep her hands clean, she is only too eager for Orestes to come to do all the dirty work.

Orestes, then, is the only human individual in the trilogy who is ultimately able to benefit from Zeus' new law, if perhaps without himself embodying its ideology.<sup>20</sup> When he eventually gets his acquittal in Athens, Orestes swears allegiance to Athens and returns safely home.

Thus, in both *Seven Against Thebes* and *Oresteia*, *σωφροσύνη* functions as the restraint of unacceptable forms of violence. On the human level, this restraint should prevent civil wars and murder within the *οἶκος*, and if the 'offenders' of these plays (Polynices, Agamemnon, Clytemnestra) all have their own reasons for acting as they do, it is invariably clear that these ends never justify their drastic means. On the divine level, violence within the family or against one's community offends the gods. To this extent, there is also a religious dimension to this restraint of violence, and

<sup>18</sup> Bowen (1986), 51.

<sup>19</sup> While Electra's 'innocent tones' (Conacher (1987), 105) avoid an unequivocal reference to the vengeance she has in mind, the audience will not fail to see through the *double entendre*. Lebeck (1971), 103, bluntly states that 'on the lips of Electra the traditional piety of this ... prayer [for vengeance] is sacrilege.'

<sup>20</sup> At *Eum.* 44, the priestess in Delphi finds him at the altar, sitting *σωφρόνως*. The adverb however means 'quietly' here, as it usually would, and does not imply that Orestes, at this stage at least, embodies the ideal of non-violence (*Eum.* 44).

ωφροσύνη is used in a second way to commend the avoidance of religious offences.

### 3. *Quiet behaviour and Control of Emotion: Seven Against Thebes, Suppliant Women*

Whereas in the case of potential aggressors, there is a contrast between the control of violence of some and the aggression of the others, victims of an attack are torn between fear and dismay and composure. Women especially are represented as especially prone to extravagant displays of distress, but in such crises, an open show of emotion is unacceptable. When the Theban women unequivocally show their panic in the *parodos* of *Seven Against Thebes*, Eteocles calls them *θρέμματα ἀνασχετά*, ‘unbearable creatures’ (182), and *ωφρόνων μισήματα*, ‘creatures hated by any sensible person’ (186).<sup>21</sup> Of course, Eteocles here poses as the reliable, calm leader of the city, intent on keeping up decorum even in a state of crisis, even though the very vehemence of his rebuke raises the question whether he is as *ώφρων* as he pretends. Later on in the play, Eteocles indeed loses his calm: he is now seized not by fear, but by anger (*ὀργήν*, 678) and he lusts for war (*δορίμαργος ἄτα*, 687). The tables are now turned, and it is now the chorus who try to calm down their king. The chorus, however, avoid the suggestion that the king’s anger is unacceptable (the term *ωφροσύνη* does not occur); rather, they fear that it is dangerous to go war in such a rage.

*Suppliant Women* is another play in which an imminent battle, and the strong fears it provokes, plays an important role, but here the situation is very different. The Danaids are a group of victims who conspicuously lack *ωφροσύνη* in the sense that they have great difficulty in controlling their emotions: they react in a forceful and potentially even violent manner to their precarious

<sup>21</sup> Once again, one should not accept Eteocles’ view of the chorus without questioning. For the conflict between Eteocles and the chorus as a conflict of ‘male’, militaristic and female values, see Gagarin (1976), 151-62.

situation, and thus constantly threaten to become aggressors themselves.

Thus, when towards the end of the *parodos* the girls have threatened to hang themselves and commit themselves to the Zeus of the underworld if the Olympian Zeus fails to take note of their plight (154-61), thereby involving the Argives in a *μῖασμα*, Danaus enters with a summons to their good sense (*παῖδες*, *φρονεῖν* *χρή*, 176) and urges his daughters to calm down and assume the proper modesty of suppliants:

φθογγῇ δ' ἐπέσθω πρῶτα μὲν τὸ μὴ θρασὺ  
τὸ μὴ μάταιον δ' ἐκ ἑμετώπω *σωφρονῶν*  
ἴτω προσώπων ὄμματος παρ' ἡσύχου·  
καὶ μὴ πρόλεσχος μηδ' ἐφορκὸς ἐν λόγῳ  
γένῃ· τὸ τῇδε κάρτ' ἐπίφθονον γένος.  
μέμνησο δ' εἴκειν· χρεῖος εἰ ξένη φυγάς·  
θρασυτομεῖν γὰρ οὐ πρέπει τοὺς ἥσσονας.  
(A. *Supp.* 197-203)

And let your speech be accompanied by an air of not-boldness, and let no idle threat spring forth from ... your calm faces and quiet eyes. And do not be over-eager or tedious in your speech: the people over here strongly disapprove of that. Take care to yield: you are a banished stranger in need. To speak boldly does not befit the weaker ones.

The transmitted text of the second half of line 198, ἐκ *μετώπω σωφρονῶν*, is corrupt: *μετώπω* can hardly be right in view of *προσώπων* in the next line, especially since there can be little doubt that *προσώπων* ('faces') rather than *μετώπων* ('fore-heads') is the more appropriate word here. Good sense is obtained if we accept Dindorf's *σεσωφρονισμένων*: *σεσωφρονισμένων* ... *προσώπων* would mean 'faces that have been made *σώφρονες*',<sup>22</sup> i.e. that have adopted the modest demeanour of young women. This introduces a by no means unwelcome signal for what was implicitly clear from the context, that their faces are far from calm at present. The comparatively rare middle perfect participle presents no difficulty;<sup>23</sup> it is paralleled by the adverb *σεσωφρονισμένως* at line 724.<sup>23</sup> Otherwise, one should accept that

<sup>22</sup> For the sense, cf. Hesych. π 1474 *πεπνυμένον στόμα· σεσωφρονισμένον. κυγῶλον*.

The perfect *σεσωφρονίσθαι* is used in classical times at Pl. *Phd.* 69a4 (in the deliberately paradoxical phrase *τῷ τρόπῳ τινὰ δι' ἀκολασίαν αὐτοῦς*

μετώπω is corrupt and retain *σωφρόνων*, accented as an adjective rather than a participle.<sup>24</sup> Either way, the general sense is clear: Danaus urges his daughters to drop their fierce emotional attitude: they<sup>25</sup> should refrain from uttering bold (*θρασύ*) and vain (*μάταιον*) threats, and beware of irritating the notoriously reticent Argives by a profusion of speech; instead, they should assume the quiet and modest attitude that befits a suppliant.

The association between *σωφρόνῃ* and *ἡσυχία* as an appropriate response to distressful situations is again in evidence when the Egyptians arrive, and Danaus tells them not to panic, but to consider their situation in a calm and restrained manner:

ἀλλ ἡσυχῶς χρὴ καὶ σεσωφρονισμένως  
πρὸς πρᾶγμ' ὀρώσας τῶνδε μὴ ἀμελεῖν θεῶν.  
(A. *Supp.* 724-5)

But you must in a quiet and becalmed manner keep an eye on the situation, and never ignore the gods over here.

The Danaids do in fact intermittently manage to be calm during the play. This is when Danaus brings the news that the king's plea on their behalf at the assembly has been successful. They now drop the harsh and threatening tones they had used before and exhort each other to utter 'good prayers in reward for good things' on behalf of the Argives (625f. ἄγε δὴ λέξωμεν ἐπ' Ἀργείοις | εὐχὰς ἀγαθὰς ἀγαθῶν ποινάς). The choral song that follows is indeed a prayer for the welfare of Argos, and when it is finished, Danaus re-enters to tell them that such a prayer was indeed in order: εὐχὰς μὲν αἰνῶ τάδε σῶφρονας, φίλαι, 'these sensible prayers I heartily approve of, my daughters' (710). The point of the adjective *σῶφρονας* here is that these prayers dis-

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*σεσωφρονίσθαι*, 'that in a way they have acquired restraint because of their licentiousness', quoted by Stob. 3.4.122 and Iamb. *Protr.* 66) and X. *Cyr.* 3.1.19. Otherwise, it is found at schol. E. *Or.* 129; schol. *Il.* 2.212; Phalar. *Ep.* 129.1; *Hist. Alex. Magn.* 3.33.7; Cassius Dio 45.27.3; 53.4.1; Plt. *Pomp.* 31.6; Hesych. π 1474; Gregorius Nazianzenus, *Orat.* 42, 36.485.43; Michael Psellus *Or.* 1.2749; and<sup>24</sup> Constantinus Porphyrogenitus *De virtutibus* 1.356.22.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Friis Johanson and Whittle *ad loc.*

When used of thoughts or utterances, *μάταιος*, commonly translated 'vain' or 'idle', means 'unjustified, having no basis in the situation' rather than 'empty'. Cf. *PV* 329 γλώσσηι ματαίαι ζημία προστρίβεται, *Th.* 438f. τῶν τοι ματαίων ἀνδράσιν φρονημάτων | ἢ γλῶσσε' ἀληθὴς γίγνεται κατήγορος, *Ag.* 1662 ἀλλὰ τοῦδε μοι ματαίαν γλῶσσαν ὧδ' ἀπανθίσαι.



pense with the violent threats they had used before in favour of a benevolent calm.

If the Danaids are prone to both fear and violence, they *do* possess *σωφροσύνη* in a different sense, in that they are prepared to defend their virginity at all costs. When the girls are finally allowed to enter their new city, Danaus sends them on their way with yet another ‘admonition’ or ‘summons to good sense’ (*σωφρονίσμασιν*, 992). These *σωφρονίσματα* come down to the suggestion that the girls should guard their chastity no matter what: he realises that they are young and beautiful, and that this could get them into trouble in their new-found refuge much as it did back in Egypt. Their long and arduous escape would then have been in vain, and that would make them a disgrace to their father and a laughing-stock for their father’s enemies (1006-9). Therefore, Danaus tells his daughters to value *τὸ σωφρονεῖν*, here meaning their chastity, above all other things.

μόνον φύλαξαι τὰςδ’ ἐπιστολάς πατρός  
τὸ σωφρονεῖν τιμῶσα τοῦ βίου πλέον.  
(A. *Supp.* 1012-13)

Only do keep these injunctions of your father’s in mind, valuing *σωφροσύνη* more highly than life.

This passage is commonly regarded as one of the earliest of many instances<sup>26</sup> where *σωφροσύνη* in women includes restraint in sexual matters. But it is important to note that the *σωφροσύνη* of the Danaids is not that of the married woman who is supposed to shy away from intimate contacts with other men; the Danaids are unmarried girls who, as long as this status is to prevail, are supposed to keep their virginity at any cost. There is a hint in Danaus’ words, and elsewhere in the vehement terms in which the girls express their abhorrence of marriage with the Egyptians, that the girls should and will go to extremes to preserve

<sup>26</sup> Friis Johanson and Whittle ad loc. cite *Cho.* 140, S. Fr. 682.2, and E. *Andr.* 596, *El.* 923, *Hipp.* 80, 399, 494, 1365, *IA* 544, fr. 446.2, 503.2. None of the instances from the complete extant dramas is exactly parallel to *Supp.* 1013. Of the four instances from *Hipp.*, 80 and 1365 refer to the *ritual* chastity that Hippolytus values so highly, 399 and 494 to the good sense that Phaedra cannot exhibit due to her love. *Cho.* 140 and *El.* 923 refer to Clytemnestra’s lack of faithfulness, *Andr.* 596 and *IA* 544 (indirectly) to that of Helen.

this 'chastity'.<sup>27</sup> Here again, the 'victims' are likely to turn into aggressors themselves, as of course they will in the lost plays of the trilogy. That the theme of virginity preserved at a high price is indeed important to the remainder of the trilogy, is confirmed by the song of exit, in which the Danaids once more invoke the help of Artemis to escape marriage (1018-33), whereas their servant maidens warn that one cannot completely ignore Cyprus.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, we see that in the violent conflicts of these plays, the women, who in principle are victims rather than aggressors, are required to keep their emotions in check, and react calmly in situations of danger and distress. The Theban women from *Seven Against Thebes* initially simply conform to the stereotype of women who fail to keep calm in distress; the Danaids are rather more complex: they are not only fearful but also assertive and even prone to aggression, and they constantly have to be reminded of the 'script' of appropriate behaviour: as suppliants, they have to assume an air of quiet modesty before their protectors without showing undue emotion or aggression; as unmarried girls, they are also to guard their prized virginity.

#### 4. *Subjects And Authorities: Obedience*

Apart from the *ωφροσύνη*, or the lack of it, of 'aggressors' and 'victims', the plays of Aeschylus also offer some examples of how, in the interaction between superiors and subjects, a summons to

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<sup>27</sup> This is not necessarily to say that the Danaids have 'a horror of male contact of any form'. (Winnington-Ingram (1961), 144.) Psycho-sexual interpretations of the play which relate the Danaids' repulsion of the marriage to their cousins to a horror of men in general (notably Fritz (1936), Winnington-Ingram (1961), Lesky (1964), 70 and Kraus (1984) 105) or to a special intimacy with their fathers (a.o. Caldwell (1974) and Zeitlin (1988) 231-259) are probably anachronistic in method. The point is, simply, that they have had to go to great lengths to avoid *this* particular marriage, and now cannot and will not do away lightly with the virginity they have tried so hard to preserve.

For a critique of the various 'psychosexual' interpretations, see Rohweder (1998) 102-105 and 154-5.

<sup>28</sup> The sentiment expressed in 1034-52 is quite incompatible with 1018-33; therefore, it seems reasonable to suppose that Kirchhoff was right to attribute these verses to a chorus of servant women.

*σωφροσύνη* amounts to the injunction to ‘shut up and obey’. This attitude is adopted by Hermes in dealing with the captive Prometheus (*PV* 982),<sup>29</sup> but rather more telling instances are found in the *Oresteia*. There, the peaceful, ‘proto-democratic’ spirit at Athens as represented in *Eumenides*, contrasts sharply with the authoritarian leadership of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus as shown at the end of *Agamemnon*. As soon as Clytemnestra emerges from the palace boasting that she rightfully killed her husband (1372-98),<sup>30</sup> the chorus comment adversely on her ‘boldness of speech’ (1399-1400), but Clytemnestra does not care whether they approve of her deeds or not. The old men then proceed to threaten her with banishment from the city, but Clytemnestra tells them to shut up in words that suggest that, to her, might is right:

... λέγω δέ σοι  
τοιαῦτ’ ἀπειλεῖν, ὡς παρεσκευασμένης  
ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων, χειρὶ νικήσαντ’ ἐμοῦ  
ἄρχειν· ἐὰν δὲ τοῦμπαλιν κραίνῃ θεός,  
γνώσῃ διδαχθεὶς ὅψ’ ἐ γούν τὸ σωφρονεῖν.  
(A. Ag. 1421-5).

I tell you to utter these threats in the conviction that I am prepared to confront you under equal conditions: if by force you beat me, you’ll rule. But if the god brings about the opposite, you will, though belatedly, learn to recognise what good sense means.

To Clytemnestra, τὸ σωφρονεῖν means quite simply that inferiors refrain from contradicting and opposing their superiors and keep quiet, unless they have the means to enforce their views upon their masters. Otherwise, they will be forced to *learn* (γνώσῃ διδαχθεὶς) to have the good sense to shut up: a particularly nasty variation, this, on the theme of πάθει μάθος.

<sup>29</sup> This is no doubt a deliberate humiliation of the great hero, who is here treated like an ‘ordinary’ subordinate. On *σωφροσύνη* as a quality not particularly appropriate to the hero, see especially chapter 5.2 (Ajax).

<sup>30</sup> Conacher (1987) 49–53, draws attention to the ‘double determination’ of Clytemnestra’s deed. In her first speech, especially 1379ff., she asserts her own responsibility in the strongest possible terms, yet at 1501 she claims that it was not she but the ἀλάντωρ of Atreus. At 1505f., the chorus reject the apparent consequence of this second claim (ὥς μὲν ἀναίτιος εἶ | τοῦδε φόνου τίς ὁ μαρτυρήσων; ‘who will witness that you are innocent of this murder?’).

Aegisthus is, if possible, even worse: when the chorus accuse him of ὕβρις (Ag. 1612) in response to his claim that he planned the murder and committed it voluntarily, he tells them even more bluntly to keep their peace:

ἐν ταῦτα φωνεῖς νερτέραι προσήμενος  
κώπηι, κρατούντων τῶν ἐπὶ ζυγῶι δορός;  
γνώσῃ γέρων ὦν ὡς διδάσκεισθαι βαρὺ  
τῷ τηλικούτῳ, σωφρονεῖν εἰρημένον.  
(A. Ag. 1617-20)

Do you dare say such things, sitting at the lower bench, while the masters are those at the steersman's seat of the ship? You will learn, old as you are, that to be taught a lesson is a difficult thing for a man of your age, when it has been proclaimed that you should show good sense.

Again here, σωφρονεῖν amounts to 'having the good sense to keep quiet', and it is striking that Aegisthus simply tries to force this submission on his supposed inferiors by order. A few lines later, things threaten to get really out of hand. Now it is Clytemnestra who intervenes and prevents further bloodshed, but Aegisthus continues to assert his disregarded authority:

ἀλλὰ τοῦδε μοι ματαίαν γλῶσσαν ὦδ' ἀπανθίσαι  
κάκβαλεῖν ἔπη τοιαῦτα δαίμονος πειρωμένους,  
σώφρονος γνώμης θ' ἀμαρτεῖν, τὸν κρατοῦντα (—).  
(A. Ag. 1662-4)

But that these men should pluck the flowers of ill-founded words against me in such a way, and throw up such words putting their good fortune to the test, and that they lack [?] a σῶφρων mind <and> ... the ruler.

The text of the manuscripts is more than usually corrupt near the end of the play, and line 1664 is seriously damaged<sup>31</sup> but the sense is quite clear: once again, Aegisthus claims that the old men, as inferiors, should show the good sense to keep their mouths shut.

<sup>31</sup> For the mss.' ἀμαρτήτων, Casaubon's ἀμαρτεῖν τὸν seems a sensible emendation. If one accepts his suggestion, it is probably best to follow Stanley and read θ' rather than the manuscripts' δ': the statement of 1664 seems exactly parallel to those in 1662-3. The lacuna at the end of the verse then should in all probability contain a connecting particle and another inf.: θ' ὕβρις (Blomfield) is a make-shift supplement that gives a hint of what one might expect.

After one brief appearance in *Choephoroi*, Aegisthus is killed and is not seen again on stage. The shade of Clytemnestra, on the other hand, reappears at the beginning of *Eumenides* to incite the Erinyes, who had been enjoying a break in Delphi, to go on haunting Orestes on his way to Athens. She reproaches the terrible creatures for slacking off, and suggests that her just reproaches should sting their hearts: ‘for to people of good sense these words are sharp as prickles’ (τοῖς σῶφροσιν γὰρ ἀντίκεντρα γίγνεται, A. *Eum.* 136). In what is surely the most strikingly paradoxical use of the word σῶφρων in the entire trilogy, Clytemnestra treats the Eumenides as if they were a bunch of servants who fail to do as they are told by their master: the thought that people who have their good sense intact, will have the sense of honour to be touched by ‘justified’ reproaches (135 ἐνδίκους δνείδειν) and will be stirred to action in order to avoid such criticism in future, is put to the service of Clytemnestra’s desire for revenge which is the very opposite of Zeus’ lesson. Not even in death, then, does she learn the central ‘message’ of the trilogy: πάθει yes, μάθος hardly.

### 5. Conclusion

In Aeschylus, σῶφροσύνη is mainly the prerequisite of men, and is primarily connected with abstention from unjustified violence, especially that against one’s city or one’s family. (For a diagram that tries to visualise the network connections between the uses of the terms in Aeschylus, see Fig. 5 in Chapter 9.3.) In both *Seven Against Thebes* and *Oresteia* it is clear that unjustified violence also offends the gods, and σῶφρονεῖν is used in a second way in connection with the idea that man should avoid offending the gods. In *Oresteia*, the unremitting sequence of killings is finally stopped by the court of the Areiopagos at Athens, who are the only mortals in the trilogy to learn Zeus’ ‘lesson to mankind’. *Seven Against Thebes* and *Suppliant Women* show some women who lose their calm, and their σῶφροσύνη, when they can not control their emotions under extreme conditions. In *Suppliant Women* Aeschylus offers a fairly complex picture of the ideology of σῶφροσύνη in connection with the excitable temperaments of the

Danaids. The daughters of Danaus are expected to control their emotions and to keep calm in spite of their distressful situation — apparently a quite difficult task for these irascible young women. But, being the unmarried girls they are, they have also gone to great lengths to preserve their virginity, and are now expected to guard it above all. There are strong hints that these two requirements do not, in this particular situation, fit very well, and that the girls will in fact go to extremes to satisfy them. Thus, the girls have difficulties to live up to the ‘script’ of *σωφροσύνη* in two ways.

Meanwhile, a more overtly authoritarian view of *σωφροσύνη* is presented by both Clytemnestra and Aegisthus in dealing with the Argive elders in *Agamemnon*, and by Hermes vis-à-vis Prometheus in *PV*. To these authoritarian figures, *σωφροσύνη* means that inferiors should have the good sense to shut up and obey. (In *Oresteia*, this ‘authoritarian’ view of *σωφροσύνη* is implicitly contrasted with the more ‘democratic’ application of *σωφροσύνη* found at Athens in *Eumenides*). The complications connected with this *σωφροσύνη* of submission are treated in a more intricate manner in a key text that will take up a large part of the next chapter, Sophocles’ *Ajax*.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SOPHOCLES

#### 1. *Introduction*

As we have seen in the last chapter, there is a strongly hierarchical aspect to *σωφροσύνη* in Aeschylus, where the term and its cognates are used a number of times when someone of superior status demands acquiescence and obedience from his inferiors. The problematic nature of this 'authoritarian' view of *σωφροσύνη* is an important theme in the earliest extant play of Sophocles, *Ajax* (see section 2). Its protagonist is a strong and heroic figure who, on account of this heroic temperament, is unable to adapt to the hierarchical organisation of the Greek army, and is unwilling to bend to the demands of his 'superiors'. Ajax refuses to accept the authority of the commanders of the Greek army, Menelaus and Agamemnon (*Aj.* 677), who both state their claims to obedience in strong and unequivocal terms (*Aj.* 1057, 1259), and he even fails to acknowledge the superiority of the gods (*Aj.* 132). But if Ajax is unable to 'give in'<sup>1</sup> and be a *σώφρων* subject to anyone, even the highest authorities, this is simply because he himself has strong claims to superiority on the basis of his *ἀρετή*, and not because he questions the legitimacy of hierarchical relationships in principle: in fact we hear him demanding *σωφροσύνη* from Tecmessa (*Aj.* 586) in much the same tone as it is demanded from him by Athena and the sons of Atreus.

Thus, Sophocles' treatment of the figure of Ajax suggests that the *σωφροσύνη* of obedience, while a valid social value, is hardly compatible with the ethos and status of the 'hero'. To Ajax, *σωφροσύνη* as understood by both himself and those around him, is a limitation of which he himself is utterly incapable given his heroic qualities. Here we note a strong clash between the strength of the individual and the restraint demanded by those around him, between *ἀρετή/ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη*. In later

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<sup>1</sup> The refusal to yield (*εἵκειν*) seems to be a central characteristic of the Sophoclean hero in general, cf. Knox (1964) 15-17.



chapters we will see that, on the more mundane level of life in the πόλις as well, it often seemed difficult to reconcile these very different qualities: the tension between ἀνδρεία and σωφροσύνη is very apparent, for instance, in Thucydides' famous chapter on στάσις (3.82, see chapter 7.3) and in some of the assertive but 'immoral' characters in the plays of Aristophanes (chapter 8.2). It will be Plato's *tour de force* to try to balance and reconcile the two qualities in his education of the guardians in *Republic* (chapter 10.6).

Ajax is a radically uncompromising character,<sup>2</sup> who is asked to restrain himself but cannot do so. Most Sophoclean heroes are similarly headstrong, 'larger-than-life' characters,<sup>3</sup> and perhaps it is no surprise to see that the self-restraint expected from ordinary mortals is not on their repertoire, and that σωφροσύνη is not normally much of an issue for them.<sup>4</sup> It is an issue, however, for Electra: first, after voicing her grief and her desire for revenge, she excuses herself for her emotional and even violent reactions (*El.* 307), but then she appropriates the virtue when she tells Chrysothemis that the latter's acquiescence is not, in these particular circumstances, the commendable girlish virtuousness that it normally undoubtedly is (*El.* 365, see also 465). Here Electra bends the language of conventional morality to fit a highly unusual situation, and we meet with one of the earliest 'persuasive definitions' of the term.<sup>5</sup> (On Electra, see section 3.)

Elsewhere, the appeal to σωφροσύνη is made only in connection with secondary and/or distinctly less heroic characters: apart from Chrysothemis, these are Creon (*OT* 589), Odysseus (in *Ph.* 1259, and, implicitly, in *Aj.*) and Lichas (*Tr.* 435). (See section 4 for these male characters.) Here we meet, for the first time in our survey, quite a substantial number of instances of

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Knox (1964) 8, on the tendency of Sophoclean heroes to choose disaster in preference to a compromise that would betray the hero's conception of himself.

<sup>3</sup> For an extensive discussion of the type, see Knox (1964) 1-61.

<sup>4</sup> As it seems, σωφροσύνη was never a particularly heroic quality. See Chapter 2.6, and cf. Winnington-Ingram (1980) 9.

<sup>5</sup> This is not deny, of course, that virtually all uses of σωφροσύνη serve a persuasive goal (influencing the response of their addressees), save perhaps in some theoretical discussions. But here, the term is applied to a line of behaviour to which, under normal conditions, it would almost certainly *not* apply.

what is commonly called the 'prudential' sense of *σωφροσύνη* ('having the good sense to avoid behaviour that is harmful to oneself'). This 'prudence' is a characteristic of any man who has the good sense and the responsibility to manage his own affairs and avoid anything that could only harm him. But if this type of *σωφροσύνη* is not a grandly heroic feature, this does not mean that it is in any sense a less than admirable quality. It clearly *is* most desirable for Creon, who claims to be 'sensibly' enjoying the benefits of belonging to the royal family without aspiring to the supreme power of the monarch and its attending hassles. Here we also get a first glimpse of the *σωφροσύνη* of the *ἀπράγμων* male citizen who quietly manages his own affairs, and keeps out of affairs that may only harm his own interests.

## 2. *Ajax*

The *Ajax* is the only play among the extant tragedies of Sophocles in which *σωφροσύνη* is in any sense central to the main theme of the drama. It concerns a notably 'strong' hero, μέγας Ajax, who on account of this very strength spurns divine help and proves unable to submit himself to the hierarchy of the Greek army. In his inability to submit to authority, Ajax lacks *σωφροσύνη*, and much is made throughout the play of *σωφροσύνη* in the sense, familiar from Aeschylus, of obedience to one's superiors.

The first relevant passage occurs towards the end of the prologue, where Athena shows Odysseus the sight of Ajax smitten with madness, a powerful demonstration of the power of the gods (118) and the instability of human affairs (125-6). The goddess then proceeds to tell Odysseus what he should 'learn' from this terrible example:

τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν ὑπέρκοπον  
 μηδέν ποτ' εἵπης αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἔπος  
 μηδ' ὄγκον ἄρῃ μηδέν', εἴ τινος πλέον  
 ἢ χειρὶ βρίθεις ἢ μακροῦ πλούτου βάθει.  
 ὥς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε κἀνάγει πάλιν  
 ἅπαντα τὰνθρώπεια· τοὺς δὲ σῶφρονας  
 θεοὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ στυγροῦσι τοὺς κακοὺς.  
 (S. *Aj.* 127-133)

In view of such things, you must never yourself speak any word of arrogance against the gods, nor assume any kind of pomp, if you pull more weight than another man, either by your deeds or by the depth of great wealth. See how a day brings down and brings back up again all human affairs; those who are *κῶφρονες* win loyalty from the gods, but they detest those who are bad.

According to Athena's words, there are two things which Odysseus must avoid if he is to be *κῶφρων* and to get the help of the gods: (a) he should not speak insolent words to the gods and (b) he should not assume pompous airs (*ὄγκον*, 129) on account of any superiority over others in prowess or resources.

This anti-scenario of *κωφροσύνη* clearly applies to Ajax. As to his lack of deference for the gods, he has already been heard speaking 'insolent words' against Athena (notably his rejection of her plea on behalf of Odysseus at 112-13, and his instruction to her to remain his loyal ally at 116-17);<sup>6</sup> the spectator must at this point assume that an earlier, similar, insult to the goddess is the cause for his punishment. Uncertainty on this point will be removed later in the play in the messenger speech that recounts the words of Calchas: according to the seer, Ajax had claimed on two occasions that he could do without the help of the gods: first when he haughtily and foolishly (766, *ὑψικόμπως κἀφρόνως*) rejected his father's advice before sailing to Troy (766-9), and a second time in battle, when he told Athena to help some other Greeks who did really need her (774-5). So Ajax fails to show the type of *κωφροσύνη* demanded by Athena: the goddess wants him to submit to divinity, but Ajax flatly refuses to do so.<sup>7</sup>

As to his pride and arrogance in dealing with his fellow men, we have seen him gloating over the fate of enemies and revelling in his martial superiority (96 *κόμπος πάρεστι*). Here, however, it is not only Ajax who falls short. A very similar kind of 'arrogance' is displayed in the second half of the play by both Menelaus and Agamemnon in their authoritarian dismissal of Teucer and their refusal to let Ajax be buried. Again, Agamemnon and Menelaus

<sup>6</sup> Winnington-Ingram (1980) 14: 'His tone is dismissive and almost patronizing.' Kirkwood (1958) 102 speaks of 'bluff familiarity'.

<sup>7</sup> On the authoritarian nature of Athena in this play, see Garvie (1998) 136, Flashar (2000) 49: 'Der athenische Zuschauer, der Athene auch als Schutzgöttin Athens versteht, dürfte irritiert gewesen sein.'

demand submission, Teucer refuses to submit. When Odysseus finally prevails upon Agamemnon, we see that he alone is capable of avoiding the arrogance of which most characters in the play are all too guilty. On this level, Odysseus is indeed seen to take Athena's summons to *σωφροσύνη* to heart, if probably in a rather more 'humane' way than intended by his authoritarian patron deity.

Thus, Athena's final words are meant to ring in the minds of the spectators and accordingly, they are strikingly phrased. The thought that arrogance can be brought down in a single day, but that the gods look kindly upon those who refrain from insubordination, is familiar enough after, say, *Seven Against Thebes* or *Persians*. But what is striking indeed is that the 'bad guys' who fail to take Athena's lesson to heart are called *κακούς* (133). *Κακός* is not a term that applies easily to Ajax or any of the heroes from the Trojan war, and it is surely significant that Athena effectively denies his *ἀρετή*.<sup>8</sup>

If Athena insists on the respect that humans should show for the gods, most human characters in *Ajax* do not fail to make clear that they also demand respect and obedience from their alleged inferiors. The point is driven home to Teucer by Menelaus, who uses quasi-political terms reminiscent of the arguments of the Erinyes in *Eumenides*:

οὐ γάρ ποτ' οὔτ' ἂν ἐν πόλει νόμοι καλῶς  
φέρουντ' ἂν, ἔνθα μὴ καθεστήκηι δέος,  
οὔτ' ἂν στρατός γε σωφρόνως ἄρχοιτ' ἔτι  
μηδὲν φόβου πρόβλημα μηδ' αἰδοῦς ἔχων.  
(S. *Aj.* 1073-6)

For it could never happen either that in a *polis* the laws are duly respected, if there is no fear, or that an army lets itself still be commanded *σωφρόνως* without a sense of fear or *αἰδώς* thrown in.

Just as in a *polis* the laws will not be respected if people have nothing to fear, likewise, Menelaus claims, it is not conceivable that the soldiers of an army will respect the authority of their commanders any longer (*ἔτι* in 1075 seems to betray a real fear for the loss of authority on part of Menelaus), and let themselves be ruled in an orderly, quiet, sensible manner (*σωφρόνως*, 1075),

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Adkins (1960) 172ff., Winnington-Ingram (1980) 55.

unless there is fear and αἰδώς (1076);<sup>9</sup> otherwise, men will feel free to infringe on the rights of others and act as they like (1081, ὅπου δ' ὑβρίζειν δρᾶν θ' ἂν βούλεται παρῆι), and this is an immediate threat to the stability of a society or a collective enterprise. To Menelaus, Ajax was a mere subordinate, who by refusing to accept the verdict of the sons of Atreus threatened the order of the Greek army, and his insubordination constitutes ὕβρις, an assault on the authority of the commanders, which is to be punished by letting his corpse lie unburied.<sup>10</sup>

Menelaus' brother Agamemnon is even more unpleasantly authoritarian when he bluntly denies Teucer the right to plead on Ajax' behalf:

καὶ σοὶ προσέρπου τοῦτ' ἐγὼ τὸ φάρμακον  
 ὁρῶ τάχ', εἰ μὴ νοῦν κατακτῆσθαι τινά·  
 ὃς ἀνδρὸς οὐκέτ' ὄντος, ἀλλ' ἤδη κτεῖας,  
 θαρσύνων ὑβρίζεις καὶ ξελελυθεροστομεῖς.  
 οὐ σιωφρονήςεις; οὐ μαθὼν ὃς εἰ φύειν  
 ἄλλον τιν' ἄξεις ἄνδρα δεῦρ' ἐλεύθερον,  
 ὅστις πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀντὶ σοῦ λέξει τὰ κά;  
 σοῦ γὰρ λέγοντος οὐκέτ' ἂν μάθοιμι· ἐγὼ  
 τὴν βάρβαρον γὰρ γλώσσαν οὐκ ἐπαΐω.  
 (S. Aj. 1255-64)

For you as well I see this remedy [sc. the whip] coming up soon, unless you acquire some sense; you who, while the man is no longer there but is a shade already, have the nerve to insult and speak up freely. Will you not be σῳφρων? Will you not realise who

<sup>9</sup> The analogy of πόλις and army is presented in reverse by Creon in *Ant.* 663ff. Cf. Winnington-Ingram (1980), 63, who has good comments on parallel between the vindictive Menelaus' appeal to fear and that of the equally vindictive Erinyes at A. *Eum.* 516ff., 696ff.

<sup>10</sup> Throughout the play, both parties use ὕβρις-words to characterise the behaviour of their adversaries. For Ajax and his partisans, there are three insults to the hero's honour that constitute ὕβρις: first, Odysseus' victory in the contest for the arms of Achilles, for which the Atreids and, especially, Odysseus, are to be blamed (153, 196, 304, 955, 971); second, the disgraceful situation of the hero attacking the cattle instead of his enemies (304 ὑβρίσθην); and finally, the order of the Greek commanders that Ajax be denied burial (1092, 1151, 1385). At 560, Ajax utters the hope that Teucer will protect Eurysakes from ὕβρις. For the sons of Atreus, it is Ajax' refusal to accept the judgement concerning Achilles' weapons (1061, 1081, 1088) that constitutes ὕβρις, as well as Teucer's insolence (1258). Thus, the use of ὕβρις-terms is restricted to the conflicts on the human level; they are not applied to Ajax' insults to Athena. On ὕβρις in *Ajax*, cf. Fisher (1992) 312-22, Cairns (1993) 229-30, 236-9, Cairns (1996) 11-13.

you are by birth, and bring some other man hither, a free man, who will in your stead plead your case in front of us? For when you speak, I cannot even understand; because I do not know your foreign tongue.

For Agamemnon, it is Teucer's status as the son of a Greek (Telamon) and a slave woman that denies him the right to speak freely (ἐξελευθεροστομείς, 1258) in front of the Greek chief commander,<sup>11</sup> and Agamemnon underlines the point by insultingly and extravagantly suggesting that he cannot even understand his opponent's foreign tongue. What Teucer does, is to ignore the inequality between the two of them, and thus, Agamemnon thinks, to detract from Agamemnon's superior status. Just like Ajax' insubordination as decried by Menelaus, this 'insolent' behaviour constitutes ὕβρις (1258).

But Agamemnon's disparagement of Teucer may easily be regarded as hybriotic too, and the chorus hint at this when they cautiously suggest that his words are not a model of *σωφροσύνη* either:

εἴθ' ὅμιν ἀμφοῖν νοῦς γένοιτο σωφρονεῖν·  
τούτου γὰρ οὐδὲν σφῶιν ἔχω λῶιον φράσαι.  
(S. Aj. 1264-5)

Would that the two of you had the intelligence to be *σωφρονες*. I have nothing better than this to say to you both.

Treating the son of a Greek hero, even if he is technically a *νόθος*, as a foreign slave is to detract seriously from his status, and such treatment is not at all dissimilar from Ajax' (and Teucer's) refusal to take the hierarchy in the Greek army for granted.

If Ajax himself is unable to accept the precedence of Agamemnon, Menelaus and Odysseus, that does not prevent him from treating *his* subordinates in a similarly authoritarian manner.<sup>12</sup> When Tecmessa notes that Ajax hints at his imminent suicide, and asks her master what he intends to do, Ajax gruffly points out that she should show the good sense to shut up:

<sup>11</sup> As Flashar (2000) 52, the Periclean law of 451, according to which citizenship is restricted to offspring of two Athenian citizens, may be relevant to this passage.

<sup>12</sup> For the parallel between Ajax and Menelaus, cf. Kirkwood (1958) 107.

Τε. ὦ δέσποτ' Αἴας, τί ποτε δρασεῖεις φρενί;  
 Αἰ. μὴ κρῖνε, μὴ 'ξέταζε· σωφρονεῖν καλόν.  
 (S. Aj. 585-6)

— Master Ajax, what do you intend to do? — Do not examine, do not question me; it is good to be *σώφρων*.

Of course, the status difference between the male warrior Ajax and the captive woman Tecmessa is indisputable in a way that the hierarchy among the Greek heroes is not, and Ajax' dismissal of her questioning is by no means as questionable as the authoritarian posturing of Menelaus and Agamemnon; it is simply a rather blunt expression of the conventional view that a woman should shut up if her man wishes her to do so.<sup>13</sup> But the parallel with the authoritarian behaviour of Agamemnon and Menelaus cannot be overlooked either, and the scene underlines the desolation of Ajax, who feels treated as an inferior by his equals, and can not himself accept the sympathy and concern of *his* inferiors.<sup>14</sup>

In fact, Ajax of course feels that he has no choice but to kill himself. His first hints at this, in his exchange with Tecmessa, provoke considerable distress from the chorus; later on, therefore, he restates his intentions in far more subtle terms, that may even be mistaken (as they are by the chorus) to suggest that he is now prepared to give in to the Atreids.

τοιγὰρ τὸ λοιπὸν εἰσόμεσθα μὲν θεοῖς  
 εἵκειν, μαθησόμεσθα δ' Ἀτρεΐδας céβειν.  
 ἄρχοντές εἰσιν, ὥςθ' ὑπεικτέον· τί μήν;  
 καὶ γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα  
 τιμαῖς ὑπείκει· τοῦτο μὲν νιφοστιβεῖς  
 χειμῶνες ἐκχωροῦσιν εὐκάρπῳ θέρει·  
 ἐξίσταται δὲ νυκτὸς αἰανῆς κύκλος  
 τῇ λευκοπῶλῳ φέγγος ἡμέραι φλέγειν·  
 δεινῶν τ' ἄῃμα πνευμάτων ἐκοίμισε  
 στένοντα πόντον· ἐν δ' ὁ παγκρατῆς ὕπνος  
 λύει πεδῆσας, οὐδ' αἰὲ λαβῶν ἔχει·  
 ἡμεῖς δὲ πῶς οὐ γνωσόμεσθα σωφρονεῖν;  
 (S. Aj. 666-677)

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Heath (1987) 183-4 and *ibid.* n. 37, who refers to the comments of the scholiast: ἐν τούτῳ γὰρ μάλιστα ἡ σωφροσύνη ταῖς γυναιξὶ διασώζεται, εἰ μὴ περιεργάζωντο ὅ τι πράττοι ὁ ἀνὴρ.

<sup>14</sup> For the isolation of the Sophoclean protagonist, see Knox (1964) 32-4.

Therefore for the rest of our lives we will know to yield to the gods, and learn to revere the sons of Atreus. They are leaders, so one has to yield. Why not? Even what is formidable and very strong yields to *τιμή*. That is what happens when snowy winters make room for a fruitful summer. And the everlasting circle of the night steps aside for the white-horsed day to blaze forth its light. And the blast of the fearful winds [ceased and] laid the roaring sea to sleep; moreover, almighty sleep releases what it has bound, and does not always keep what it has taken. As for us, how will we not learn to show good sense?

Ajax' speech is carefully formulated to convey his intentions to the public, while his reticent and euphemistic formulations turn out to assuage the fears of Tecmessa and the chorus. First, there

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<sup>15</sup> This may hardly be the place to go deeply into the interpretation of the so-called *Trugrede*, so I will limitate myself in the main to stating the position that I myself take.

Interpretations of the *Trugrede* fall broadly into three categories.

(I) First, there are those who assume that Ajax really intermittently abandons his intention to kill himself, e.g. Bowra (1944) 39-42, Webster (1969) 96-9, Leiniks (1974) 200. The main arguments against this view are (i) that there are no explicit indications in the text of the play that Ajax changes his mind twice, and (ii) that it requires a singularly 'optimistic', 'naïve' reading of the speech itself without regard for its dark undertones.

(II) Second, many commentators assume that Ajax does not give up his intention to kill himself, but that he deliberately deceives Tecmessa and the chorus, e.g. Jebb (1896) xxxviii, Whitman (1951) 75, Von Fritz (1962), Moore (1977) 55-66, Winnington Ingram (1980) 47n109, Stevens (1986) 328-9, Blundell (1989) 83-4. The main problem for this type of approach is that verbal insincerity seems very much out of character for the blunt and forthright Ajax as presented in this play. (His secret attack on the Greek leaders, *ἐξω τοῦ δράματος*, does not provide an adequate parallel for *verbal* secrecy.)

(III) Finally, and in complete opposition to the first group, there are those who take it that Ajax is still intent on suicide but does *not* mean to deceive his dependants. Exponents of this view include Welcker (1845) 302-22, Ebeling (1941), Kirkwood (1958) 160-2, Sicherl (1977), 92, Knox (1979) 136-8.

On a naïve reading, this last line of approach again forces interpreters to ignore the many verbal ambiguities in the speech. But it remains possible that in the speech, Ajax sincerely discusses his intention to kill himself, but in slightly euphemistic terms that are perspicuous to all but the most willfully optimistic interpreters. The chorus exactly fall into this latter category, cf. Kirkwood (1958) 162: 'At the end the meaning is so thinly veiled that except to Ajax' followers, who are ready to grasp at any straw, there can be no deception.' The truth of the matter, then, I think, is somewhere between groups (II) and (III), but rather closer to the latter: Ajax hints at, and argues for, his suicide in a manner that is not so much deliberately deceptive as compassionately reticent. From different angles, Moore (1977) and Sicherl (1977) come especially close to this view. This, incidentally may well be the point of his *ἐθελύνθην τόμα*, 651: Ajax has 'softened his words' (cf. Knox (1964) 138-9,



are the verbs *εἵκειν* and *ὑπείκειν*; on a 'naïve' interpretation as adopted by the chorus, they may be taken as 'yield, give in to' (cf., e.g. *An.* 472, *Aj.* 371), but Ajax clearly has a much more drastic way of 'getting out of the way' in mind, and the striking and apparently incongruous juxtaposition of 'yield to the gods, and revere the sons of Atreus', where the verbs seem to be given the wrong complements, helps to discourage the spectator from an innocent interpretation without explicitly blocking it for the chorus. Then there is *καὶ γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα | τιμαῖς ὑπείκει*. On an innocent interpretation, the expression simply refers to the 'powerful' natural phenomena in the examples that follow, and serves as an introduction to the conclusion *a fortiori* that Ajax should yield as well; but in view of the predicate *τιμαῖς ὑπείκει*, it seems likely that for *τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα*, Ajax is (also) thinking of a human paradigm rather than one from nature: he himself is the most formidable and the strongest warrior among the Greeks, and thus a human example of *τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα*, and he is getting out of the way now because of the prestige (*τιμαί*) of his opponents: what seems an innocent generalisation turns out to be a wry statement of facts. Thirdly, as has been observed, the examples of natural phenomena 'yielding' to their opposites all involve not just a change for the good (which goes well with the innocent interpretation) but also the extinction of the original phenomenon, which does not quite encourage the optimistic view. And it is the

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Winnington-Ingram (1980) 48n.111), but only his *words*, not his intentions, nor even, I think, the *content* of his words, cf. Moore (1977) 55: 'Ajax is led into this unnatural language [i.e. sustained *double entendre*] by his desire to *avoid verbal falsehood*' (my italics). In this reticence (cf. Kirkwood (1958) 162), he is — almost despite himself — remarkably successful: the fact that he is indeed completely misunderstood does not so much prove his insincerity, as underline his utter isolation from his surroundings (cf. Von Fritz (1962) 252).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Winnington-Ingram (1980) 49: 'If there is anything in the speech which betrays its 'insincerity', it is this choice of words.' See further Knox (1979) 157n.85, Garvie (1998) 189, and the scholion: *ἐπιφθόνως ἔφρασεν ἐν εἰρωνείᾳ ἀντιστρέψας τὴν τάξιν* ἔδει γὰρ εἰπεῖν θεοὺς μὲν ἐβειν εἵκειν δὲ Ἀτρεΐδαϊς. 'Spoken in a malignant, sarcastic manner, by turning around the order: for he should have said 'revere the gods, and give in to the Atreidai.'

<sup>17</sup> As Heath (1987) 188 notices, Ajax describes his suicide in terms of healing at 581-2; in this respect, his suicide is a change for the good as well, much as the natural changes in the exempla.

<sup>18</sup> Likewise, the verbs chosen in the *similia* do not encourage an 'optimistic' interpretation: *ἐκχωροῦσιν* (671), *ἐξίσταται* (672), *ἐκοίμισε* (!) (674), *λύει* (676).

same with the expression ‘to learn to *ωφρονεῖν*’. On the innocent interpretation, this may seem to mean, ‘to learn to obey and comply with those in authority’, much as *ωφροσύνη* is used elsewhere in the play. But it is clear that Ajax is quite incapable of this submissive type of *ωφροσύνη*. He is a superlative example of the martial, ‘Homeric’ hero; among his main defining qualities are *μεγαλοψυχία* (154 *μεγάλων ψυχῶν*, 161, 205, 933 *μέγας*), *ἀρετή* (617, 1357), and ‘raw strength’ (205 the adi. *ὠμοκρατής*). These martial qualities are strongly contrasted to and, for Ajax, utterly incompatible with the *ωφροσύνη* of the subject vis-à-vis his rulers. For Ajax, *ἀνδρεία* and *ωφροσύνη* clash. So if Ajax now claims that he must ‘learn to be *ώφρων*’, he does not mean that he must now give up the ‘arrogance’ on account of his martial prowess, but that he must now do what is clearly the only ‘sensible’ and ‘honourable’ thing left for him.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. *Electra*

*Ajax* has shown us a grand, heroic character incapable of the submissive, obedient kind of *ωφροσύνη* that his society demands from him. The only other Sophoclean play in which *ωφροσύνη* is of more than passing interest is *Electra*. The play shows two girls living under the regime of a mother and a stepfather who killed their father. Chrysothemis is a conventionally ‘decent’ girl, to whom *ωφροσύνη* may well be an important quality. But for the main character, *Electra*, things are very different.

<sup>19</sup> The future tense *γνωσόμεθα* suggests that he is not *ώφρων* now, see Goldhill (1986) 190-1. In fact, he will only be so in death.

<sup>20</sup> I largely agree with Sicherl (1977) 81-82 here, save perhaps for the emphasis he puts, following North (1966) 50ff., on the element of self-knowledge. Ajax is *ώφρων* not in that he submits to his supposed superiors, but in that suicide is the only sensible option if he is to leave the world without suffering humiliation, with his honour intact. This is an impressively ‘sinister’ type of good sense, perhaps, but not one that requires particularly deep self-knowledge.

A similarly ‘sinister’ interpretation for *ωφρονεῖν*, incidentally, applies to E. *Hipp.* 1034, where *έωφρόνησε οὐκ έχουσα ωφρονεῖν* is to be understood as ‘she did a sensible thing (i.e. saving her honour by killing herself), while incapable of being sensible (i.e. being a loyal wife).’ See also chapter 6.5.

As soon as she makes her entrance towards the end of the prologue, she starts lamenting her distress (ὡ μοί μοι δύστηνος are her very first words in 77, and she is announced by Orestes in 80 as ἡ δύστηνος Ἡλέκτρα). In reaction, the chorus-members, though by and large sympathetic to her, give a number of hints that her mourning is somewhat excessive (e.g. 123 ἀκόρεστον οἰμωγάν, 'insatiable lamentation'; 140 ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων, 'immoderately', 155 τῶν ἔνδον εἰ περιεκά, 'you are more extreme than the others inside'; 177 μὴθ' ὑπεράχθεο, 'do not feel too much pain'). After the entrance song, Electra concedes that she may indeed have offended by showing excessive signs of grief (254f. αἰσχύνομαι μὲν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ὑμῖν ἄγαν. 'I am ashamed, ladies, if you feel that by my many lamentations, I am bearing things badly too much'). But she argues that in her present situation, which she describes at length, she could not possibly do otherwise:

ἐν οὖν τοιούτοις οὔτε σωφρονεῖν, φίλαι,  
οὔτ' εὐσεβεῖν πάρεστιν· ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς  
πολλή 'στ' ἀνάγκη καπιτηδεύειν κακά.  
(S. *El.* 307-9)

My point is that in such a situation it is not possible to be *σωφρων*, nor to be *eusebês*. No, in bad situations it is very much necessary to plot bad things as well.

The passage echoes Electra's prayer in *Cho.* 140 (see chapter 4.2), but the interpretation of *σωφρονεῖν* will be different here. In view of the preceding context, the *σωφρονεῖν* of which Electra claims to be incapable in her present situation, is primarily the kind of 'quiet' behaviour and repression of the emotions normally expected from women and girls (cf. A. *Th.* 186 and various references in *Supp.*, chapter 4.2 and 4.3 above): they are expected to keep quiet, but Electra is unable to do that. And οὔτ' εὐσεβεῖν refers to her repeated deprecating remarks on her mother (261-2 τὰ μητρός ... ἔχθιστα συμβέβηκεν, 273-4 μητέρ' εἰ χρεὼν ταύτην προσανδάν, 287 λόγοις γένναια, 293 ἐξυβρίζει, 299 ὕλακτεῖ). But Electra is a woman of action too, and ἐπιτηδεύειν κακά changes the tone of the passage. Electra has been planning 'bad schemes' by arranging the escape of Orestes, and thus by keeping open the possibility of revenge, and in fact, even her

breaches of modesty are in themselves a kind of ‘revenge’. Thus, ‘not *σωφρονεῖν*’ acquires a sinister undertone in retrospect, when *καπιτηδεύειν κακά* reminds the audience of the terrible things to come.

Whereas Electra, in her present situation, firmly rejects the standards of morality that normally apply to a girl, her sister Chrysothemis is a far more conventional character; for her, conventional standards still hold good, and it is no surprise that she is more susceptible to appeals to *σωφροσύνη* than her sister.<sup>21</sup> In their first confrontation, Electra tries to persuade her sister that, like herself, she should no longer comply with Aegisthus and their mother, and give up the life of affluence, of which Chrysothemis herself has hinted that it is important to a free girl (339-40), and to which, according to Electra, she attaches too much value (359-62). For, Electra suggests, if Chrysothemis will continue to ‘hate’ them only in words, but does nothing, she will lose her reputation:

τῆς σῆς δ’ οὐκ ἐρῶ τιμῆς τυχεῖν,  
 οὐδ’ ἂν σύ, σῶφρων γ’ οὔσα. νῦν δ’ ἐξὸν πατρός  
 πάντων ἀρίστου παῖδα κεκληθεῖν, καλοῦ  
 τῆς μητρός· οὔτω γὰρ φανῇ πλείστοις κακή,  
 θανόντα πατέρα καὶ φίλους προδοῦσα σούς.  
 (S. *El.* 364-8)

But this status of yours, I do not desire to get it, nor would you, at least if you are *σῶφρων*. As things are, while it is possible for you to be called a child of the very best father, you must now be called a child of your mother. For in this way you will seem bad to most people, as you forsake your dead father and your *philoí*.

The appeal to *σωφροσύνη* and a good reputation seems conventional enough, where a girl like Chrysothemis is concerned. But whereas good sense of this kind normally leads precisely to the quiet behaviour and obedience that Chrysothemis exhibits (and that is apt to be rewarded by the kind of comfortable affluence that Chrysothemis presently enjoys), Electra claims that Chrysothemis must now, for the sake of her very *σωφροσύνη* and her all-

<sup>21</sup> MacLeod (2001) 67 argues out that Chrysothemis is nevertheless less than admirable in that she acts out of concern for herself rather than for conventional morality.

important good reputation, forsake all these things and join her sister in resisting their mother and stepfather, and share the hardships that Electra suffers. This is striking rhetoric indeed, for *ὡφρων γ' οὔσα* here commends a line of behaviour that is utterly different from what normally constitutes *ωφροσύνη* for a girl: Electra's concern is for their reputation (366 *κεκλήσθαι*, 367 *φανῆι*) in the long term, what people will say if they fail to take action and stand up in defence of their father.<sup>22</sup> It is this concern with a good reputation which may ultimately justify the interpretation of Electra's behaviour in terms of *ωφροσύνη*, but Electra's 'active', almost 'masculine' view of the behaviour that safeguards this reputation is thoroughly unconventional for a woman, and from this point of view, hardly constitutes typical female *ωφροσύνη*.<sup>23</sup>

Thus it is no surprise that Chrysothemis is not immediately convinced. She counters with the warning that Electra will be shut up in the dark if she does not stop making trouble (378-84), and she suggests that her sister too could do with some good sense: not the *ωφροσύνη* of the young girl this time, but the sound 'common sense' (384 *φρονεῖν*, 390 *ποῦ ποτ' εἰ φρενῶν*, 394 *εἰ φρονεῖν*, 398 *μη' ἔξ ἀβουλίας*) to put up with those in power and to avoid getting herself in worse trouble.

The chorus too try to influence Chrysothemis with an appeal to *ωφροσύνη*. Towards the end of the same *epeisodion*, when it has transpired that Clytemnestra has sent Chrysothemis to bring some offerings to the grave of Agamemnon (405-6), Electra tries to dissuade her sister from doing this; she points out that it would be a religious offence to obey and bring the dead man the gifts of the woman who has harmed him most (428ff.). Instead,

<sup>22</sup> Later on, when they think Orestes has died, Electra argues that the girls should now perform the act of revenge themselves, and that this act will bring them 'good fame', *εὐκλεία* (973.) She here shows an almost 'masculine' concern for *κλέος*, radically different from Chrysothemis' conventional sense of decency. For the difference between the girls on a wide range of values, cf. Kirkwood (1958) 137f, 240f. For the second confrontation between the girls, cf. MacLeod (2001) 135-52.

<sup>23</sup> Electra's 'redefinition' or 'private interpretation' of *ωφροσύνη* has been emphasized by Blundell (1989) 159, North (1966) 65. MacLeod (2001) 62-70 is right to point out that Electra is not at all idiosyncratic in content; what is unusual is that Electra appropriates a type of *ωφροσύνη* that is normally reserved for males.

she should offer some locks of hair of her sister and herself. The chorus-leader agrees that Chrysothemis would indeed do well to comply with her sister's wishes:

πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἡ κόρη λέγει· cὺ δέ,  
εἰ cωφρονήσεις, ὦ φίλη, δράσεις τάδε.  
(S. *El.* 464f.)

It is with an eye to reverence that this girl speaks. And you, if you will be cωφρων, you will do as she says.

Again this is an appeal to conventional ideas of cωφροσύνη, the good sense to avoid offending the gods this time, in the service of a not wholly conventional line of action. But what Electra suggests here is obviously respectful vis-à-vis her father, as the chorus admit when they acknowledge Electra's εὐσέβεια (again, the two virtues are paired: for girls cωφροσύνη is expected to be accompanied by respect for their elders).<sup>24</sup> And though it falls outside conventional cωφροσύνη in that it does involve disobedience of Clytemnestra's orders, it can be done without Clytemnestra knowing it. Hence Chrysothemis is easily persuaded this time, and shows no major hesitation except for the warning that this must be kept secret from their mother.

#### 4. *The 'Prudential' cωφροσύνη of the Non-Heroic Citizen*

We have now met with two Sophoclean protagonists, Ajax and Electra, who, in view of their strong character and the extreme situation in which they find themselves, find it impossible to comply with the cωφροσύνη of convention. We also met one lesser figure, Chrysothemis, who, as a model of conventional 'girlish' cωφροσύνη, is subjected to appeals to this quality, in order that she may be engaged for a special and perilous cause.

In the other plays, cωφροσύνη is never invoked in connection with any of the protagonists, and the quality seems entirely irrelevant to their characters or to the situations in which they find themselves. What we do get, however, are glimpses of the cωφροσύνη of a very different type of person, not the powerful

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Blundell (1989) 160, 'in this instance it [viz. Electra's brand of cωφροσύνη] is perhaps not incompatible with the conventional *sophrosyne* of decorum.'

hero, but the private citizen, who circumspectly manages the affairs of himself and his οἶκος in a cautious, prudent and well-advised manner. These are not the great tragic heroes on their way to an inevitable and pitiable downfall, but men whose good sense prevents them from actions and aspirations that bring no gains but only trouble. This kind of prudence is often appealed to in a generalising statement that serves a persuasive goal.<sup>25</sup> Typically, it is invoked to break off an unwelcome theme of discussion, or to cut short deliberations.

A straightforward example of the ideology of good sense occurs in a passage where Philoctetes summarises his explanation why nobody ever visits his island:

φέρ', ὦ τέκνον, νῦν καὶ τὸ τῆς νήσου μάθησις.  
 ταύτῃ πελάζει ναυβάτης οὐδεὶς ἐκὼν.  
 οὐ γάρ τις ὄρμος ἔστιν, οὐδ' ὅποι πλέων  
 ἐξεμπολήσει κέρδος ἢ ξενώσεται.  
 οὐκ ἐνθάδ' οἱ πλοῖ τοῖσι χώφροσιν βροτῶν.  
 (S. *Ph.* 300-4)

Well, my boy, now you must also learn the nature of this island. No seaman ever visits it on purpose. For there is no anchorage, nor is it a place to which one can sail in order make a gainful deal or be received as a guest. Not hither is the course of any mortal who is χώφρων.

Sailing to a desert island that has no harbour brings no promise of trade or hospitality, and involves the risk of damage to the ship. A merchant has nothing to gain from it, and a great deal to lose, hence no one in his right mind will come to the island on purpose.

<sup>25</sup> Many of these take the form of γνώμαι. Lardinois (1995) 13-19, (2001) 94-5, following Aristotle's definition (*Rhet.* 1394a21-26 Kassel) defines γνώμαι as 'not concerning particulars ... but general, and not about all things ... but about all things that are actions' (Lardinois (2001) 94, translating Ar *Rhet. ibid.*). According to him, γνώμαι typically combine standard syntactical and lexical structural patterns and certain standard themes. Of the examples considered below, *Tr.* 435, with its nominal phrase and and genitive ἀνδρὸς οὐχὶ χώφρονος, is strongly gnomic in form, but not, probably, in content: Lichas is indeed trying hard to present his evasiveness as self-evident. *OT* 589 (χώφρονες do not want to be king) is gnomic in form (the indefinite relative clause) and commonplace in content (cf. *Hipp.* 1013, chapter 6.4.). *Ph.* 304 is a general statement (τοῖσι χώφροσιν) but not properly gnomic, for it contains a statement not about an action, but about a thing (Philoctetes' island). *Ph.* 1259-60 is not a general statement.

Now Philoctetes' description of his island is presented as a straightforward statement of facts, explaining why the desert island is indeed deserted. Elsewhere, this 'prudential' *ωφροσύνη* is usually invoked in the service of a persuasive goal. A good example is Creon in *OT*, who tries to refute Oedipus' suspicion that he wishes to usurp Oedipus' royal power. Creon points out that the kingship holds no attractions for him, as he is already the second man in the state; the royal power would only bring worries that would keep him from sleep:

κένψαι δὲ τοῦτο πρῶτον, εἴ τι ν' ἂν δοκείῃ  
 ἄρχειν ἐλέσθαι ξὺν φόβοις μᾶλλον ἢ  
 ἄτρεστον εὖδοντ', εἰ τὰ γ' αὖθ' ἔξει κράτη.  
 ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὔτ' αὐτὸς ἰμείρων ἔφην  
 τύραννος εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ τύραννα δρᾶν,  
 οὔτ' ἄλλος ὅστις ωφρονεῖν ἐπίσταται.  
 (S. *OT* 584-9)

Consider this first: Do you think that anyone would choose to rule with fears rather than to do so while sleeping peacefully, if he is going to have the same power? I at any rate am not myself a man who desires to *be* a king rather than *do* the things a king would do; nor is anyone else who is able to be *ωφρων*.

Such cautionary reasoning, that one should not aspire to kingship if it brings only disadvantage, is not likely to appeal to heroic figures, and Creon's generalised appeal to *ωφροσύνη* ('no one in his right mind would want kingship') fails to do away with Oedipus' suspicions.

The appeal to prudence is applied more successfully, if with unconcealed sarcasm, to the notably 'unheroic' figure of Odysseus in *Philoctetes*. Odysseus threatens to use violence to prevent Neoptolemus from restoring the bow to Philoctetes, but hesitates to put his threat into practice when the young man proves ready to retaliate. In order to do away with the threat of violence altogether, Neoptolemus condescendingly praises Odysseus' prudence and sarcastically suggests that this is the kind of good sense that will save him a lot of trouble in future:

Οδ. καίτοι σ' ἔασω· τῷ δὲ κύμπαντι στρατῷ  
 λέξω τὰδ' ἐλθὼν, ὅς σε τιμωρήσεται.  
 Νε. ἐσωφρόνησας· κἂν τὰ λοίφ' οὔτω φρονῇς,  
 ἵσως ἂν ἐκτὸς κλαυμάτων ἔχοις πόδα.  
 (S. *Ph.* 1257-60)



(Odysseus): Very well, I will let you; but to the entire army I will tell this on my return; they will punish you.

(Neoptolemus). Now you are *κῶφρων*! And if you go on thinking like this, you may well keep yourself out of misery.

To refrain from an act that would put oneself in considerable danger (as a warrior Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, is superior to Odysseus) obviously makes sense; this argument of prudence is applied by Neoptolemus in sarcastic approval of what, one feels, is perhaps rather mean cowardice: Odysseus obviously has wicked intentions, but lacks the guts to fulfil them.

Thus the *κῶφρων* man will stay out of trouble and danger, and he will wisely not engage in senseless activities. This last notion is exploited by Lichas in *Trachiniae*, who tries to cut short the embarrassing conversation with the messenger with the claim that the man is mad, and that it makes no sense to engage in further discussion:

ἄνθρωπος, ὃ δέσποινα, ἀποστήτω. τὸ γὰρ  
νοσοῦντι ληρεῖν ἀνδρὸς οὐχὶ κῶφρονος.  
(S. *Tr.* 434-5)

Let the fellow, my queen, depart. For to chatter with a deranged man is not the mark of a *κῶφρων* man.

The rhetoric of the *κῶφρων* man who will not engage in things that make no sense is here applied in the service of an attempt to escape from an embarrassing and precarious situation.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> This 'prudential' kind of *κωφροσύνη* is also invoked, it seems, in fr. 896 εἴθ' ἥσθα κῶφρων ἔργα τοῖς λόγοις ἴσα, as this is cited by the scholiast on E. *Rh.* 105 εἴθ' ἥσθ' ἀνὴρ εὐβουλος ὡς δρᾶσαι χερί. Similarly, in fr. 936 (ὅπου γὰρ οἱ φύκαυτες ἥσδονται τέκνων, | οὐκ ἔστιν αὕτη κωφρόνων ἀνδρῶν πόλις), prudent men are said not to accept that children take precedence over their parents, for the sake of the well-being of their πόλις.

The other fragments in which the adjective occurs address familiar 'other-regarding' types of *κωφροσύνη*: filial respect for one's parents (fr. 64. 1 ῥῆσις βραχεῖα τοῖς φρονούσι κῶφρονα | πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας καὶ φυτεύσαντας πρέπει), the chastity of the loyal wife (fr. 682, from *Phaedra*: οὕτω γυναικὸς οὐδέν ἄν μείζον κακὸν | κακῆς ἀνὴρ κτήσεται' ἄν οὐδὲ κῶφρονος | κρείσσον), respect for δίκη (fr. 683.1-3 οὐ γὰρ ποτ' ἄν γένοιτ' ἄν ἀσφαλὴς πόλις | ἐν ἧ τὰ μὲν δίκαια καὶ τὰ κῶφρονα | λάγδην πατεῖται, also from *Phaedra* and probably spoken by Theseus in condemnation of Hippolytus, cf. Radt (1977) 478), and disinclination to ὕβρις (fr. 786 ὕβρις δέ τοι | οὐπώποθ' ἥβης εἰς τὸ κῶφρον ἵκετο, | ἀλλ' ἐν νέοις ἀνθεὶ τε καὶ πάλιν φθίνει).

### 5. Conclusion

As we have seen in the present chapter, the Sophoclean protagonist is hardly the figure to look at in search of models of *σωφροσύνη*. Of the seven extant plays, *Ajax* is very important as it features a hero who on account of his extreme ethos, with its headstrong and exclusive emphasis on honour, merit and courage, is unable to accept the claims to (superior) *τιμή* of divine and human others, and his inability to comply with divine and human authority is construed throughout the play in terms of a lack of *σωφροσύνη*: Ajax offends the gods, and is incapable of the obedience demanded by the Atreids. For Ajax, martial prowess and (this particular type of) *σωφροσύνη* are utterly incompatible, and it seems that his stance, though extreme, is not atypical for Greek thought, given that some Platonic dialogues will have to go to extreme lengths to show that *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* are compatible after all, and that their combination is not just possible, but, ultimately, necessary.

Such a combination of ‘strength’ and *σωφροσύνη* is not the forte of the Sophoclean protagonist, however. Thus we see that Electra, on account of her very determination and strength, is incapable of *σωφροσύνη* in the conventional sense of calm and decorous behaviour, unlike her sister, but she is very apt at employing the conventional rhetoric of (masculine) *σωφροσύνη* to suit her own particular ends.

But in spite of this, *σωφροσύνη* in Sophocles is not just the ‘negatively defined’ quality of observing one’s limitations. His plays offer us important glimpses of *σωφροσύνη* as the quite positive and desirable quality of the non-heroic, free individual citizen, who ‘prudently’ manages his own affairs and avoids behaviour that will bring only losses and no gains.

This ‘prudential’ *σωφροσύνη*, while not particularly relevant to the Sophoclean protagonist, as we noted above, will be seen to be of great importance for the Athenian citizen of the classical period (see especially Chapter 8 on Aristophanes and the Orators).

(For a diagram that tries to visualise the network connections between the Sophoclean uses, see Fig. 6 in Chapter 9.3.)

In the next chapter, things will be radically different. Euripidean protagonists are, by and large, perhaps rather more like contemporary *πολίται* than those of Sophocles, in any case we will find them discussing the pros and cons and contrasting aspects of *ωφροσύνη* at far greater length than any of the characters from the earlier tragedians. This makes Euripides one of the primary sources for *ωφροσύνη* in the classical period, and it is to this source that we shall turn now.

## CHAPTER SIX

### EURIPIDES

#### 1. *Introduction*

In relation to the theme of *σωφροσύνη*, Euripides differs from his tragic predecessors in at least two important respects. Euripides uses *σώφρων* and cognates in a far wider range of senses than ever before in our extant sources, and in studying the use of the terms in his plays, we come substantially nearer to an appreciation of the rich and complex polysemy of the terms in classical times. Besides, Euripides is also ‘the first tragic poet to exploit fully and deliberately the dramatic possibilities inherent in the manifold connotations of *sophrosyne*’.<sup>1</sup> This is not completely without precedent, of course. In the last chapter, we have seen that Ajax’ inability to live up to the *σωφροσύνη* demanded by those around him is a central theme in that play, even if Ajax’ understanding of the virtue does not differ fundamentally from that of his fellow-warriors, and the polysemy of the term is only incidentally exploited in the deliberate ambiguity of the so-called *Trugrede*. We have also seen Electra using a ‘persuasive’ definition of the virtue in order to get Chrysothemis’ help. But Euripides goes further. In some of his plays, incompatible interpretations of *σωφροσύνη* are a central source of conflict for the protagonists, nowhere more so than in *Hippolytus* and *Bacchae*, but also in *Medea* to a considerable degree. In a sense, these plays can even be said to offer a dramatic counterpart to the great moral debates on *σωφροσύνη* in some of the Platonic dialogues.

The aim of this chapter is, then, twofold. Its first sections will offer a conspectus of the uses of *σώφρων* and cognates in Euripides, giving a concise overview of the relatively straightforward instances. Section 2 will focus on a number of general senses in which the terms are used in relation to (mostly) male characters, including ‘sanity’ as opposed to various states of frenzy, ‘prudence’ as opposed to inopportune behaviour (frequently in

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<sup>1</sup> North (1966) 69.

‘gnomic’ expressions), ‘control of desires’ (especially relevant to those male characters who respect the sexual integrity of their female guests, like the farmer in *Electra* or Proteus in *Helena*) and — in the suppliant dramas — the clash between the *σωφροσύνη* of the good Athenian protectors and the irreverent violence of the non-Athenian heralds. The next section (3) will complete this survey by focusing on the *σωφροσύνη* of women. Euripides is our richest source on the ideology of *σωφροσύνη* in relation to women. The fullest example of the *σώφρων* woman in Euripides is Andromache (*Andr.*, *Tr.*), for whom *σωφροσύνη* includes, next to the all-important marital ‘fidelity’, ‘quietness’ and ‘obedience’ (*Tr.* 645ff.) and, in *Andromache*, absence of jealousy. Examples of *σωφροσύνη* in extreme situations are offered by the self-sacrifice of the *παρθένος* in *Hcl.*, a rare example of juvenile *σωφροσύνη*, and more extensively by the self-sacrifice of Alcestis.

The second part of this chapter (sections 4-7), will discuss some passages and plays in which the polysemy of the words is exploited to dramatic effect. The most straightforward example is offered by the farmer in *Electra*, who argues that his refusal to sleep with Electra is indeed *σωφροσύνη* even though people are likely to view this behaviour in very different terms (section 4). More complex examples are offered by three plays, *Hippolytus*, *Medea* and *Bacchae*. For *Hippolytus* (section 5), true *σωφροσύνη* consists in his own particular brand of religiously motivated ‘chastity’, but this *σωφροσύνη* is offset by his arrogant contempt of those whom he considers incapable of this kind of ‘purity’, including notably his stepmother. Phaedra, by contrast, is incapable of *σωφροσύνη* in that she is overcome by *ἔρως*; but she does show concern for *σωφροσύνη* in the sense that she tries hard to save the reputation of herself and her children, and eventually commits suicide as the ‘honest’ way out of her predicament. In *Bacchae* (section 6), women who are supposedly incapable of *σωφροσύνη* in matters of sex are a primary concern for king Pentheus too. In his enraged insistence on these aspects of the virtue, Pentheus quite forgets about other aspects of *σωφροσύνη*: his behaviour gravely offends the god Dionysus. The aggression of the Theban king is here contrasted effectively with the uncanny quietness of Dionysus in his impersonation of the Lydian stranger.

More complex, finally, are the issues in *Medea* (section 7). Medea's fierce and ultimately violent response to Jason's marriage is viewed by the latter in terms of sexual jealousy and a failure to comply with the plans of her husband, and thus, ultimately, as a lack of *σωφροσύνη* (*Med.* 1369). But Medea has a charge against Jason too. She does not adhere to the Greek ideal of the submissive wife, but treats Jason as an equal, and demands recompense for all that she did for him. For her, Jason falls short in *φιλία*. And Medea is also an expert in manipulation. Thus, she uses the expression 'you were *σώφρων* to do as you did' to both Creon and Jason (*Med.* 311, 884) in order to lull them into thinking that she is not angry with them any longer.

Thus, the themes of *ἔρως* and the difficulty of controlling desire are especially important in a number of Euripidean dramas, and *σωφροσύνη* as 'control of desires' and 'fidelity' is prominent in his plays in many guises, and to a far greater extent than we have seen thus far. In this sense, study of Euripides especially deepens our appreciation of the discussion of *σωφροσύνη* as 'control of desires' in the philosophical discussions in Plato.

## 2. *The Use of σῶφρων and Cognates in Euripides: Men*

The second section of this chapter offers a conspectus of the relatively 'straightforward' uses of *σῶφρων* and cognates in Euripides, starting with those uses that are applied mostly to male characters; section 3 will focus on the specific senses of *σῶφρων* and cognates in relation to women.

(1) 'Sanity'. In a number of instances, the verb *σωφρονεῖν* is used to describe a 'normal' or 'sane' state of mind, as opposed to 'madness' or 'frenzy'. (In this use, the verb *σωφρονεῖν* is closely associated with *εὖ φρονεῖν*, cf. *Ion* 520-1 quoted below.) In *Hel.* 97, for instance, Helen supposes that Ajax must have been mad (*μανέντ'*) to kill himself, for no one would do so while sane (*σωφρονῶν*). In this use, the focus is on someone's state of mind, rather than on the behaviour in which this state of mind manifests itself. A person's abnormal state of mind will often be adduced in explanation of what is otherwise inexplicable and/or

unacceptable behaviour. Thus, while there is no doubt that suicide is abnormal and regrettable, the tone of Helen's comment on Ajax is one of compassion rather than disapproval. Similarly, it is with regret, and not with disapproval that Electra notes the frenzy of Orestes, who is now a helpless victim to the Erinys, but was sane only just before (*Or.* 254 ἄρτι *χωφρονῶν*). And again, it is with no more than gentle reproach that Hecuba describes the embarrassing frenzy of Cassandra, and urges her daughter to hand over her torch:

παράδος ἐμοὶ φῶς· οὐ γὰρ ὀρθὰ πυρφορεῖς  
μαινὰς θαάζους, οὐδὲ *εἰ* αἱ τύχαι, τέκνον  
σεχωφρονίκας, ἀλλ' ἔτ' ἐν ταύτῳ μένεις.<sup>2</sup>  
(*E. Tr.* 348-50).

Give me that torch. You do not handle it rightly in your present state of frenzy, nor have our misfortunes made you *χωφρων*, child; you remain in the state in which you were before.

While there is no doubt that Cassandra's frenzy is both embarrassing (it is hardly a dignified reaction to the distress of defeat) and even downright dangerous ('you do not handle that torch rightly'), Cassandra is, again, not accountable for her inappropriate and dangerous behaviour due to her state of divinely-inspired ecstasy.

Twice, this 'intellectual' use of the word is combined with an unequivocally 'moral' sense to comic effect. In *Ion* 520-1, the unsuspecting Ion is greeted with overwhelming enthusiasm by his new 'father' Xouthus. Ion can only excuse this lack of restraint by supposing that this stranger must be mad, but Xouthus replies that it is a grim norm that forces a parent to stay away from his new-found child:

Ιων. εὖ φρονεῖς μέν; ἢ *εἰ* ἔμηνεν θεοῦ τις, ὦ ξένη, βλάβη;  
Ξο. *χωφρονῶ* τὰ φίλταθ' εὐρῶν εἰ φυγεῖν ἐφίεμαι;  
(*E. Ion* 520-1)

<sup>2</sup> The best way to make sense of the manuscripts' *εἰ αἱ τύχαι* ... *ἐχωφρονήκας* is to read *σεχωφρονίκας* (from *χωφρονίζω* *make χωφρων*), as implied by the scholiast's periphrasis *χώφρονα πεποιήκασι* (see Diggle's apparatus). Good sense is also obtained by reading *οὐδὲ καὶ τύχαις* (Heath) ... *ἐχωφρόνησας* (Nauck), 'you have not become *χωφρων* in view of your misfortunes'. However, *ἐχωφρόνησας* is definitely the *lectio facilior*, and *ἐχωφρονήκας* is probably best explained as a partial 'normalisation' of the rare *σεχωφρονίκας*.

(Ion:) Are you in your right mind? Or did a god harm your sense and make you mad?

(Xouthus:) Am I in my right mind if I find my dearest one and then want to run away from him?

Ion understandably thinks that the stranger who embraces him so enthusiastically must be out of his wits, but Xouthus' rhetorical question in reply points out that the usual standard of restraint and control of emotion does not apply when a father finds his lost son, and that it would be an unusually strict norm of *σωφροσύνη* indeed that forced him to 'run away' from his loved one: he is, in short, not a 'mad' stranger, but a rightly overjoyed father who has found his long-lost son.<sup>3</sup>

A second pun on two senses of *σωφρονεῖν* occurs in a passage from *Heracles*. The goddess of frenzy, Lyssa, is brought in by Iris to knock Heracles out of his wits, but Lyssa strongly disapproves of Iris' and Hera's plans, and starts moralising on Heracles' renown (849) and on the merits (851-3) that show his loyalty (846 *φίλους*) vis-à-vis the gods (851-3). Iris tells her that she was not brought hither in order to 'be *σώφρων*':

Ιρ. μὴ σὺ νοιθέτει τά θ' Ἥρας καὶ μὰ μηχανήματα.

Λυ. ἐς τὸ λῶιον ἐμβιβάζω σ' ἔχνος ἀντὶ τοῦ κακοῦ.

Ιρ. οὐχὶ σωφρονεῖν γ' ἔπεμψε δεῦρό σ' ἡ Διὸς δάμαρ.

(E. *Her.* 855-7)

(Iris:) Stop criticising the intrigues of Hera and myself. (Lyssa:) I set you on the better track, instead of the wrong one. (Iris:) It was not in order to be *σώφρων* that Zeus' wife has sent you hither.

Again, the pun is a juxtaposition of the 'mental' sense of *σωφρονεῖν* ('sanity' versus 'madness') and an 'other-regarding' one ('restraint of violence'). Lyssa shows *σωφροσύνη* in her plea not to use violence against a *φίλος* of considerable merit, but Iris

<sup>3</sup> The reading of L is to be retained in line 521. Diggle adopts Jacobs' *οὐ φρονῶ* for *σωφρονῶ*, and Triclinius' *φιλεῖν* ('kiss') for *φυνεῖν* ('Am I not in my right mind if, on finding my dearest, I kiss him?'). The two changes hang together (one necessitates the other), but they are quite unnecessary. While *φιλεῖν* is evidently what Xouthus does, *φυνεῖν* is what Ion thinks he should do: 'Would you call me *σώφρων* if, on finding my dearest, I would run away from him?'.



cuts this short by suggesting that, for the goddess of ‘madness’, *ωφροσύνη* (‘sanity’) is not on the agenda.

(2) ‘Prudence’ and ‘common sense’. A second group of uses is the use of *ωφρων* to commend the ‘prudence’ or ‘good sense’ of those who do only what is good for themselves. Even more obviously than in Sophocles (chapter 5.4), the appeal to ‘good sense’ of this kind often occurs in general phrases, and it is frequently invoked to cut short unwelcome topics of deliberation.

Two passages repeat Creon’s argument from OT (chapter 5.4) against the desirability of royal power.<sup>4</sup> These are spoken by Hippolytus in his self-defence, and by Jocasta in her confrontation with Polynices. Both contrast the *πράγματα* of the king with the quiet life of normal citizens.

ἀλλ’ ὥς τυραννεῖν ἥδὺ; τοῖσι ωφροσιν  
ἥκιστα γ’, εἰ μὴ τὰς φρένας διέφθορεν  
θνητῶν ὅσοισιν ἀνδάνει μοναρχία.  
ἐγὼ δ’ ἀγῶνας μὲν κρατεῖν Ἑλληνικόν·  
πρῶτος θέλοιμ’ ἄν, ἐν πόλει δὲ δεύτερος  
κὺν τοῖς ἀρίστοις εὐτυχεῖν ἀεὶ φίλοις·  
(E. *Hipp.* 1013-18)

Will you argue that it is pleasant to be king? Not for men of good sense, unless royal power has utterly destroyed the wits of those that it attracts. As far as a victory in the Greek games is concerned, I’d certainly like to be first, but in the polis I prefer to be the second man, and enjoy a life of happiness with the very best of friends.

τί τὴν τυραννίδ’, ἀδικίαν εὐδαίμονα,  
τιμᾶις ὑπέρφεν καὶ μέγ’ ἥγχει τόδε;  
περιβλέπεσθαι τίμιον; κενὸν μὲν οὔν.  
ἢ πολλὰ μοχθεῖν πόλλ’ ἔχων ἐν δώμασιν  
βούλῃ; τί δ’ ἔστι τὸ πλέον; ὄνομα ἔχει μόνον·  
ἐπεὶ τά γ’ ἀρκοῦνθ’ ἱκανὰ τοῖς γε ωφροσιν.  
(E. *Pho.* 549-54)

Why do you put such extreme value on kingship, that pleasant injustice, and do you consider it something great? Is it such honour to be a prominent figure? No, it is meaningless. Do you really pre-

<sup>4</sup> Both passages are *γνώμαι* not only in form but also in content: note the general plural *τοῖσι ωφροσιν* in *Hipp.* 1013 and *Ph.* 554; the latter also takes the typical form of a nominal phrase. Cf. Lardinois (1995) 13-19, (2001) 94-5.

fer many labours combined with many possessions? What is this 'more'? It's but a word. 'Sufficient' is enough for men of sense.

The first of these passages is spoken by Hippolytus to convince Theseus that he did not have any reason to assault Phaedra; the second passage by Jocasta who wishes to dissuade Polynices from an armed confrontation with his brother. Both clearly fail to have any effect on their addressee, and both are formulated in a way that seems to draw the public's attention to this inefficacy. In Hippolytus' case, it is the renewed appeal to *σωφροσύνη* itself so shortly after his unsuccessful defense of his own *σωφροσύνη* (994-1007, see section 5) that is almost offensively clumsy;<sup>5</sup> in Jocasta's speech, the appeal is to arguments that are truisms for a private citizen of modest means in a democratic πόλις, but that are conspicuously unlikely to appeal to a dethroned prince of Polynices' status.<sup>6</sup>

Another rhetorical truism is that 'everywhere, to people who are *σώφρονες*, life is sweeter than death' (*Or.* 1509, *πανταχοῦ ζῆν ἥδὲν μᾶλλον ἢ θανεῖν τοῖς σώφροσιν*). This maxim, paralleling Helen's comments on Ajax' suicide (see above) is employed by the Phrygian captive in defense of his *προσκύνησις* for Orestes, who threatens to kill him and takes offence at this oriental act of submission. Also from the book of common-sensical wisdom comes the comment of the messenger who warns Theoclymenus of the Spartans' deceit and drives home the point by stating that 'sensible lack of gullibility is a most useful thing for mortals' (*Hel.* 1625-6 *σώφρωνος δ' ἀπιστίας | οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν χρησιμώτερον βροτοῖς*).<sup>7</sup>

One passage free from the appeal to commonplaces, but is still clearly calculated to round off an unwelcome discussion, is the excuse of the nurse in *Hipp.*, who, when blamed by Phaedra for approaching Hippolytus, apologizes by stating: 'we are wast-

<sup>5</sup> See Barrett (1964) *ad loc.*, and Kovacs (1982) 30, who deletes the passage on the ground of its rhetorical inadequacy.

<sup>6</sup> Hence, these verses too are condemned by Kovacs (1982).

<sup>7</sup> Again, these lines take the typical form of *γνώμαι*: note the nominal phrase and the plural *τοῖς σώφροσιν* in *Or.* 1509, and the use of the evaluative statement *οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν χρησιμώτερον* in *Hel.* 1626. For this type of expression, cf. Lardinois (2001) 95n.11.

ing words. I had no good sense to do as I did.’ (*Hipp.* 704 *μακρηγοροῦμεν· οὐκ ἐσωφρονοῦν ἐγώ*).

As in the case of the use of *σωφρονεῖν* in the sense of ‘being sane’, the appeal to ‘prudential’ *σωφροσύνη* can be misapplied to comic effect. An example is offered by the Cyclops, who claim that he does not care about the Zeus *xenios*, and that it makes no sense to do so:

ἀγὼ οὔτινι θύω πλὴν ἐμοί, θεοῖσι δ’ οὔ,  
καὶ τῇ μεγίστῃ, γαστρὶ τῇδε, δαιμόνων.  
ὥς τοῦμπιεῖν γε καὶ φαγεῖν τοῦφ’ ἡμέραν,  
Ζεὺς οὗτος ἀνθρώποισι τοῖσι σῶφροσιν,  
λυπεῖν δὲ μηδὲν αὐτόν.  
(*E. Cy.* 334-8)

These sheep of mine I offer to no one except myself, — not to the gods! — and to my stomach, mightiest of divinities. For to drink and eat one’s daily portion, that is Zeus to a man of sense, that and not to harm oneself.

Here, the rhetoric of common sense is misapplied to comic effect, and invoked in defence of a wildly outrageous cannibalism that breaks all the rules of hospitality and thus offends the very same Zeus about whom Polyphemos claims not to care (341). Again, the joke plays with two uses of *σωφροσύνη*: the ‘prudence’ or ‘common sense’ that the monster claims to observe, and the respect for divinity (see (3) below) that he utterly ignores.

(3) ‘Restraint of violence and respect for the gods.’ In a third group of uses, *σωφροσύνη* is used to commend those who restrain their aggression, and refrain from undue violence. As in Aeschylus (chapter 4.2), Amphiaraus with his lack of ὕβρις and ostentation is again a model of *σωφροσύνη* in this respect and he is mentioned twice in passing (*Ph.* 177, 1112).

Violence of *dramatis personae* is also criticised as a lack of *σωφροσύνη*. Thus, when Menelaus in *IA* rebukes Agamemnon for his unwillingness to sacrifice Iphigenia, the latter suggests that his brother should drop his insolent (379) and fierce (381) attitude and instead show the *σωφροσύνη* not to kill one’s φίλοι (379, 407). Later on, when Agamemnon yields, it is Clytemnestra’s turn to plead with *him* to spare his daughter’s life, and to suggest that he will be σῶφρων to do so (*IA* 1208, σῶφρων ἔσσι).

The killing of Clytemnestra by Orestes is another violent act that is not readily accepted; Tyndareus complains to Menelaus that Orestes could have pursued a *αἵματος δίκη* ('trial for manslaughter') against his mother (*Or.* 500) and send her back to her father (501) instead of killing her; such restraint would have earned him a reputation of *σωφροσύνη* instead of his present misery (*Or.* 502 τὸ σὼφρόν τ' ἔλαβ' ἄν ἀντὶ σμφορᾶς).

Violence on a larger scale, between πόλεις, is at stake in the suppliant dramas. In the debate between Demophon and the Argive herald in *Hcl.*, the latter suggest that Athenian protection for the suppliant children of Heracles would be an unacceptable offence to Argos, and that the Athenian would show good sense if he did not harm the Argives (*Hcl.* 263, βλέπτων γ' ἐκείνους μηδὲν, ἦν δὲ σὼφρονῆς). Against this threatening use of the 'prudential' type of *σωφροσύνη* ('you will only harm yourself if you resist us'), Demophon warns the Argive not to use violence against the suppliants, for Demodocus is prepared to kill him if the Argive fails to learn *σωφροσύνη* (*ibid.* 272, εἰ μὴ γ' ὁ κῆρυξ σὼφρονεῖν μαθήσεται). In the second half of the play, the aggressive animosity between Alkmene and Eurystheus is contrasted with the more peaceful attitude of the Athenian πόλις, which *σωφροσύνη* acquits the Argive after his defeat (1012).

As in *Eumenides*, and also in Euripides' *Suppl.*, and Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, the foreign policy of Athens is presented here as one that does away with violence, and protects those in need of protection. The content of Athenian propaganda in tragedy seems to have been remarkably consistent throughout the age of the Athenian empire.

(4.) 'Control of desire'. If in public life, restraint of violence is a main feature of 'male' *σωφροσύνη*, in private life, control of desires is prominent. This control is most obviously conspicuous in those male characters who respect the integrity of women who do not belong to their *oikos* but are entrusted to their care. Thus, Proteus is chosen to guard Helen because Hermes judges him to be 'most σὼφρων among men' (*Hel.* 47, σὼφρονέστατον βροτῶν). Another prominent example of male restraint in sexual matters is the farmer in *Electra*, who does not touch his wife because of her higher status (*El.* 45-6). Electra tells her brother that the

man never touched her, not only for fear of Orestes' revenge, as Orestes supposed, but *also* because of his own *σωφροσύνη* (261 τοῦτ' αὐτὸ ταρβῶν· πρὸς δὲ καὶ σώφρων ἔφν. 'That is indeed what he feared. But besides, he was *σώφρων* as well). Such lofty morals are not shared by everyone, apparently, and the farmer himself is well aware that some people apply very different criteria to decide what *σωφροσύνη* is (*ibid.* 53) and judge him a fool (50) rather than a *σώφρων* (on this passage, see section 4 below).

Another mythical model for whom restraint in sexual matters is the decisive criterion for his proverbial *σωφροσύνη* is Peleus (see chapters 3.2 on Pi. I. 8. 24-26, and 8.2 on Ar. Nu. 1067). His reputation is important for his scene in *Andromache*. Peleus speaks with the voice of an expert when he launches his attack on the adulterous Helen, and on the general lack of *σωφροσύνη* of Spartan women (*And.* 595-601); in response, Menelaus has a hard time vindicating his decision not to punish Helen as a token of his own *σωφροσύνη* (*And.* 681-2 εἰ δ' εἰς πρόσωπον τῆς ἐμῆς ἐλθὼν ἐγὼ | γυναικὸς ἔσχον μὴ κτανεῖν, ἐσωφρόνουν, 'If, on coming eye to eye with my wife, I refrained from killing her, I had good sense to do so'). His far-fetched argument is that Helen provided the Greeks with an opportunity for learning courage. And when the irascible and violent Menelaus suggests that *he* himself will have a word with Neoptolemus to see if Peleus' grandson will have the *σωφροσύνη* to punish Andromache and to avoid future offences to the Spartans (*And.* 740-1, καὶν μὲν κολάζῃ τήνδε καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ᾗ | σώφρων καθ' ἡμᾶς, σώφρον' ἀντιλήψεται, 'And if he punishes her, and will from now on be *σώφρων* to us, he will get a *σώφρων* treatment in return.'), there is the strange effect of the *ignoramus* teaching the expert in his own field. The *σωφροσύνη* advocated here by Menelaus, so utterly different from the traditional 'decency' embodied by Peleus, amounts to the submission demanded by an arrogant ruler from his 'inferiors'; it strongly reminds one of the Menelaus from S. Aj., and is fully consistent with the anti-Spartan sentiments that abound in *Andromache*.

Peleus' son Achilles is not commonly thought of as a model of *σωφροσύνη*, probably because the quality is not very relevant to his Iliadic role of the greatest Greek warrior. The young Achilles as portrayed in *IA*, however, is a different matter altogether. The

respectful, almost reverential manner in which he first confronts Clytemnestra seems typical of the well-behaved young man (his αἰδώς being very evident, 821, 833), and the Argive queen duly applauds his respect for σωφροσύνη (824, αἰνῶ δ' ὅτι σεβείς τὸ σωφρονεῖν). A more 'adult' manifestation of his σωφροσύνη occurs later in the same *epeisodion*, when he offers to plead with Agamemnon on Iphigenia's behalf. Here, it is his disinclination for violence, his willingness to act λελογισμένως rather than χθένει (1021), that invites Clytemnestra's recognition of his σωφροσύνη (1024 ὡς σώφρον' εἶπας).

More or less without a parallel in Euripidean drama is the figure of Heracles in *Alceste*. On hearing that Admetus has a funeral to attend, Heracles is duly reluctant to enter the house as a guest, but when Admetus is vague about the identity of the deceased and encourages Heracles to enter the house, Heracles has no scruples about enjoying Admetus' hospitality. This is deplored in a semi-comic passage by the servant, who complains that Heracles entered the house at all, and adds that this ill-behaved guest was not content to accept 'quietly' (σωφρόνως, *Alc.* 753) what he was offered, but had the nerve to order all kinds of extras. Heracles' lack of quietness obviously violates the rules of decency in a house in mourning, and his immodest demand for extras of course fits in with the comic stereotype of Heracles the glutton.

### 3. *The Use of σώφρων and Cognates in Euripides: Women*

The senses that we dealt with in the last section are either unrelated to a specific sex or age category, or else predominantly manifestations of σωφροσύνη in adult males. 'Sanity' as opposed to madness or frenzy is of course relevant to both male and female figures, but 'prudence'/'good sense', for instance, is a type of σωφροσύνη far more relevant to adult male citizens, who are responsible for the well-being of themselves and their dependents, rather than to any type of person in a subordinate position, who have fewer opportunities to act as autonomous agents. (But the nurse in *Hipp.* offers an exception.) By and large, the same goes for 'control of violence', and again, the explanation may

simply be that women, children and slaves have fewer opportunities to show aggression, and are therefore less in need to control it. Other types of *σωφροσύνη*, control of desires and quietness, typically manifest themselves in different ways according to sex and age category: in view of the fact that these uses ('control of desires', 'fidelity', 'chastity') differ considerably and are easily activated without the help of extensive contextual signals, it seems justified to speak here of different uses altogether.

The present section will focus on *σωφροσύνη* in relation to women. Euripides is probably our richest source on female *σωφροσύνη*, and throughout his plays, we meet a great number of typically 'good' and notoriously 'bad' women.

The mythological paragon of the good, faithful wife surely is Penelope, and Hecuba refers to her in *Tr.* 422-3 by merely mentioning her quality of *σωφροσύνη*: *σώφρωνος δ' ἔσσι λάτρις γυναικός*, 'you [i.e. Cassandra] will be the servant of a *σώφρων* woman'. If Penelope is the universal paragon, the fullest example of the good woman in Euripides' plays is undoubtedly Andromache, whose exemplary *σωφροσύνη* in her role as a wife with Hector is contrasted, both in *Andromache* and *Troades*, to the lack of *σωφροσύνη* exhibited by the daughters of Tyndareus, specifically Helen and her daughter Hermione. Andromache herself gives a full self-assessment in her long speech in *Troades*:

ἐγὼ δὲ τοξεύσασα τῆς εὐδοξίας  
 λαχοῦσα πλείον τῆς τύχης ἡμάρτανον.  
 ἃ γὰρ γυναιξὶ σῶφρον' ἔσθ' ἠϋρρημένα, 645  
 ταῦτ' ἐξεμόχθουν Ἑκτορος κατὰ στέγας.  
 πρῶτον μὲν, εὐθα (κὰν προσῆι κὰν μὴ προσῆι  
 ψόγος γυναιξίν) αὐτὸ τοῦτ' ἐφέλκεται  
 κακῶς ἀκούειν, ἥτις οὐκ ἔνδον μένει,  
 τούτου παρείσα πόθον ἔμιμνον ἐν δόμοις· 650  
 ἔσω τε μελάθρων κομψὰ θηλειῶν ἔπη  
 οὐκ εἰσεφρούμην, τὸν δὲ νοῦν διδάσκαλον  
 οἰκοθεν ἔχουσα χρηστὸν ἐξήρκουν ἐμοί.  
 γλώσσης τε σιγὴν ὄμμα θ' ἥσυχον πόσει  
 παρείχον· ἥϊδι δ' ἅ μ' ἐχρῆν νικᾶν πόσειν 655  
 κείνῳι τε νίκην ὧν ἐχρῆν παριέναι.  
 καὶ τῶνδε κληδὼν ἐς στράτευμ' Ἀχαικὸν  
 ἐλθοῦς· ἀπώλεσέν μ'· ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἠιρέθην,  
 Ἀχιλλέως με παῖς ἐβουλήθη λαβεῖν  
 δάμαρτα· δουλεύσω δ' ἐν αὐθεντῶν δόμοις. 660

κεί μὲν παρώσας· Ἔκτορος φίλον κάρα  
 πρὸς τὸν παρόντα πόσιν ἀναπτύξω φρένα,  
 κακὴ φανοῦμαι τῷι θανόντι· τόνδε δ' αὖ  
 στυγοῦς· ἔμαντ' ἡς δεσπότης μισήσομαι.  
 καίτοι λέγουσιν ὥς μί' εὐφρόνη χαλαῖ  
 τὸ δυνμενὲς γυναικὸς εἰς ἀνδρὸς λέχος·  
 ἀπέπτυσ' αὐτὴν ἥ τις ἄνδρα τὸν πάρος  
 καινοῖσι λέκτροις ἀποβαλοῦς· ἄλλον φιλεῖ.  
 (E. Tr. 643-68)

665

As for me, I aimed at a good reputation (*eudoxia*), obtained more than just that, but did not turn out to have good luck. For all deeds of *σωφροσύνη* that were invented for us women, all these I dutifully practised in Hector's house. First, given the fact that (whether or not there is an outspoken reproach to women), the very deed produces a bad reputation if someone does not stay within, I said farewell to the desire for that, and did remain at home. And within the house, I did not allow the smart gossip of women in: I had my own mind as a good instructor from within the home, and so I was quite self-sufficient. I gave my husband a silent tongue and an untroubled eye; and I knew when I had to prevail over my husband, and to leave the victory to him when it was good to do so. Rumour of all this has reached the Achaean army; this has destroyed me. For when I was made captive, the son of Achilles set his mind on having me as a partner: I will be a slave in the house of killers. And if I cast aside my love for Hector, and open my heart to my present master, I will appear a bad wife to my dead man; but if I openly abhor the other, I will earn the ill will of my masters. Mind you, they say that one night removes the dislike of a woman for a man. I despise a woman who drops her former husband in favour of a new one, and transfers her loyalty to another.

Andromache is confronted with an impossible dilemma: if she refuses Neoptolemus because of her loyalty to Hector, she will incur his ill will, and be treated accordingly, but if she gives in in spite of herself, she will have to face the reproach of disloyalty to Hector (663). And the irony of her situation is that it is her very excellence that is the source of her distress, because it is her fame as a good wife that is the reason for Neoptolemus' desire. This excellence includes (i) acceptance of the quiet seclusion in the house: she remained inside (647-50), and did not indulge in gossip with other women (651-3) but was content on her own; (ii) quiet and obedient behaviour (654) and indulgence of her husband (655-6): she was not concerned to score points over



him at all cost; and, crucially, (iii) her faithfulness to Hector (661-4), which she now will be forced to give up. Quietness, obedience, and marital fidelity, here we do indeed seem to have the main pillars of female *σωφροσύνη*, and Andromache presents us with a full statement of the ideology.<sup>8</sup>

In *Andromache*, the Trojan princess finds herself threatened by the jealousy of Neoptolemos' official wife, Helen's daughter Hermione. Hermione accuses Andromache of using *φάρμακα* (157) to attract Neoptolemus. In reply, Andromache again claims that Neoptolemus was attracted by her virtues (*ἀρεταί*, 208), and that Hermione falls short in this respect because she, as a haughty Spartan, disdains her humble surroundings and hurts the pride of her husband (214-5, *χρὴ γὰρ γυναῖκα, κἄν κακῶι πόσει δοθῇ, | στέργειν, ἄμιλλάν τ' οὐκ ἔχειν φρονήματος*, 'For a woman, even if she is given to a man of humble status, must cherish him, and not make a competition of pride.'). She then cites her own lack of jealousy as a sign of her indulgence with Hector, and warns Hermione that jealousy is nothing less than *φιλανδρία*, 'infatuation with men', and that the Spartan girl is in danger of emulating her mother Helen in that respect:

ὦ φίλταθ' Ἔκτορ, ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὴν σὴν χάριν  
 σοὶ καὶ ξυνήρων, εἴ τί σε σφάλλοι Κύπρις,  
 καὶ μαστὸν ἤδη πολλάκις νόθοις κοῖς  
 ἐπέσχον, ἵνα σοι μηδὲν ἐνδοίην πικρόν.  
 καὶ ταῦτα δρῶσα τῇ ἀρετῇ προσηγόμην  
 πόσιν· σὺ δ' οὐδὲ ρανίδ' ὑπαιθρίας δρόσου  
 τῶι σῶι προσίξεις ἀνδρὶ δειμαίνουσ' ἑαῖς.  
 μὴ τὴν τεκοῦσαν τῇ φιλανδρίαι, γύναι,  
 ζῆτει παρελθεῖν· τῶν κακῶν γὰρ μητέρων  
 φεύγειν τρόπους χρὴ τέκν' ὅσοις ἔνεστι νοῦς.  
 (E. *Andr.* 222-31)

Dearest Hector, I by contrast went along with your desire for your pleasure, whenever Cypris did somehow knock you off your feet, and many times now have I given the breast to your bastard sons: I did not want in any respect to displease you. And by doing so, I brought my husband close to me by means of my *aretè*. You on the other hand do not even allow a drop of heavenly rain to touch your husband in your present fear. You should not try to emulate

<sup>8</sup> Andromache essentially accepts, here and in *Andr.*, the male-generated ideology of female *σωφροσύνη*, cf. Allan (2000) 181-2.

your mother in *philandria*, madam: if the mother is bad, the children must avoid her ways, if they have any sense.

The point is striking, but certainly relevant to the context. The childless Hermione blames Andromache of sleeping with her dead husband's killer (171-2: incidentally exactly the reproach that Andromache anticipates in *Tr.*), and connects Andromache's faithlessness to the general promiscuity of foreigners (173-6). In response to this stereotypical view of barbarians, Andromache also links Hermione's behaviour to her lineage. She retorts that the female *ἀρετή* of obedience to and indulgence of her husband even includes tolerance with regard to paramours, and that it is this *ἀρετή* of hers that was ingratiating to Hector. Hermione's intolerance of Neoptolemus' liaison with Andromache, by contrast, is to be taken as a sign of infatuation with men, *φιλανδρία*; this, Andromache suggests, is precisely what motivated Hermione's mother Helen to commit adultery.<sup>9</sup> Thus, the daughter equals the vices of her mother, and it is not the barbarian captive but the Spartan princess who lacks *σωφροσύνη*. Hermione's answer shows that Andromache's speech does indeed amount to an accusation of a lack of *σωφροσύνη*:

Ερ. τί σε μνομυθεῖς καὶ ἀγῶν' ἔρχηι λόγων,  
ὥς δὴ γὰρ ἐν σῶφρων, τὰ μὰ δ' οὐχὶ σῶφρονα;  
(E. *Andr.* 234-5)

Why these pompous words, why do you engage in a battle of words? Am I to take it that *you* are *σῶφρων*, and what I do is not?

Hermione is thus a true daughter to her mother, both on account of her *χλιδή* (stressed right at her first entrance, *Andr.* 147) and her *φιλανδρία*. That a woman's jealousy is regarded as a sign of *φιλανδρία* and a lack of *σωφροσύνη* may seem striking, but the passage is by no means unique. As we will see below (section 7), there is a similar charge against Medea when she fails to accept Jason's new marriage, and Jason's complaint that Medea lacks *σωφροσύνη* is confirmed by the chorus of that play. And of course it is exactly this type of jealousy that is the source of the

<sup>9</sup> For the sense of *φιλανδρία* as 'being infatuated with men' and the association of this with *μοιχεία*, cf. Pl. *Smp.* 191e καὶ ὅσαι αὐτὴ γυναῖκες φίλανδροί τε καὶ μοιχεύτραι ἐκ τούτου τοῦ γένους γίνονται. On the lack of 'self-control' of both mother and daughter, cf. McClure (1999) 181.

tragic error of Deianeira (S. *Tr.*).<sup>10</sup> It seems, then, that absence of jealousy, and absence of a possessive infatuation with men, is indeed part of the ideology of female *σωφροσύνη*.

If Hermione falls short of the ideal, her mother Helen is of course the classic example of the faithless ‘bad’ woman. In the discussion between Peleus and Menelaus in the same play, she is attacked on account of her infidelity by Peleus (*Andr.* 594, 596, 601), who supports his attack with a diatribe against Spartan ethics. The main idea here is that the freedom that Spartan girls enjoy to go out of the house and practice sports together with boys (597-600), precludes their *σωφροσύνη*. As in the Greek Hermione’s invectives against the ‘promiscuous barbarian’ Andromache, the accusation of a lack of *σωφροσύνη* is here linked to an ethnic stereotype, the idea being this time that Helen’s lack of fidelity is typical of her Spartan descent.

Elsewhere, Helen is also charged with ostentation (*χλιδή*), just like her daughter Hermione. This is in *Troades*, where Helen appears in full regal pomp, thus providing the fullest possible contrast to the dejection and misery of the Trojan women; Hecuba suggests that in recognition of her transgressions (*Tr.* 1027), Helen should ‘show *σωφροσύνη*’ rather than her present *ἀναιδεία*. *σωφροσύνη* here amounts to ‘modesty’ as opposed to ostentation, though this modesty is supposed to result from a sense of responsibility for the disastrous consequences of Helen’s infidelity. It is only in *Helen*, in which the conventional story of Helen is inverted in vindication of her virtue, that Helen is — paradoxically, but appropriately in this context — credited with the *σωφροσύνη* (*Hel.* 932, 1684) of marital loyalty.

Clytemnestra, Helen’s sister, is also very much the bad adulteress of tradition that we already met in the *Oresteia* and in

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<sup>10</sup> When confronted with Iole, Heracles’ new conquest, Deianeira tries not to respond with anger, but to outdo her rival by regaining Heracles’ attentions. Sending the magic garment is, for her, a sincere, if tragically misguided, attempt to win back Heracles’ favours without openly showing hostility to his affair with Iole. See especially verses 552-4 *ἀλλ’ οὐ γάρ, ὥςπερ εἶπον, ὀργαίνειν καλὸν | γυναῖκα νοῦν ἔχουσιν ἢ δ’ ἔχω, φίλαι, | λυτήριον λώφημα, τῇδ’ ὑμῖν φράσω*. ‘But as I said, it is not good for a sensible wife to be angry. I have however, ladies, a means of relief that will solve the problem. Let me tell you how it works.’

Sophocles' *Electra*. Thus she provokes withering remarks about her lack of *σωφροσύνη* both by Electra (*El.* 923, 1080, 1099) and, after her death, by Orestes and Pylades (*Or.* 558, 1132). Long before her liaison with Aegisthus, however, we find her in *IA* pleading with Agamemnon for Iphigenia's life, and adducing her own impeccable behaviour as an argument in favour.

οὐ σοι καταλλαχθεῖσα περὶ σὲ καὶ δόμους  
 συμμαρτυρήσεις ὡς ἄμεμπτος ἦ γυνή,  
 ἔς τ' Ἀφροδίτην σωφρονούσα καὶ τὸ σὸν  
 μέλαθρον αὖξουσ', ὥστε σ' εἰσιόντα τε  
 χαίρειν θύραζε τ' ἐξιόντ' εὐδαιμονεῖν.  
 (E. *IA* 1157-61)

When I had left him [Tyndareus] for your sake, you'll have to confirm that I was a blameless wife to you and your house: I was *σωφρων* with respect to Aphrodite and also made your palace thrive. As a consequence, when coming home, you had every reason to rejoice, and when you went out, to feel happy.

As in the case of Andromache's speech in *Tr.*, it appears from this passage that marital fidelity is again the central point of female *σωφροσύνη*, but that this fidelity combines with other qualities (Clytemnestra being a good housekeeper, in this case) to turn the conventionally decent wife into a truly *ἄμεμπτος γυνή*.<sup>11</sup>

The instances quoted above are remarkably consistent in the impression they give of female *σωφροσύνη*: the *σωφρων* woman is (i) faithful to her husband, (ii) quiet and inconspicuous in her behaviour (preferably staying inside the house, and not indulging in gossip and ostentation), and (iii) obedient and indulgent to her husband. Apart from these moral prerequisites, it might almost seem a bonus if, as in the case of Clytemnestra in *IA*, she also (iv) makes a good job of the administration of the household.

<sup>11</sup> There is an interesting parallel in *Lys.* 1.7, where Euphiletus claimed that *ἐν μὲν οὖν τῷ πρώτῳ χρόνῳ* (i.e. shortly after the birth of their son, and before his wife's liaison with Eratosthenes started) *πασῶν ἦν βελτίστη*, and then explains this by drawing attention to the fact that his wife, apart from then still being faithful, had many other qualities: *καὶ γὰρ οἰκονόμος δεινὴ καὶ φειδωλὸς καὶ ἀκριβῶς πάντα διοικούσα*, 'for I must say that she was a terrific housekeeper, economical, and she managed to arrange everything accurately'.

In one case, there is a suggestion that female *σωφροσύνη* goes even further, and may even include the self-sacrifice of a woman for the sake of those to whom she belongs. With Alcestis, loyalty to Admetus is put to an extreme and unusual test when it appears that she is the only one who is prepared to die in his stead. Alcestis' self-sacrifice goes way beyond what is in normal circumstances required from a *σωφρων* woman (she is indeed what her servant woman calls a 'superlative' wife, a *ὑπερβεβλημένη γυνή*, Alc. 153-4), but her superlative loyalty is valued in terms of *σωφροσύνη*.<sup>12</sup> Even Pheres to grant her this quality.

ἦκω κακοῖσι κοῖσι συγκάμνων, τέκνον·  
 ἐσθλῆς γάρ, οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ, καὶ σωφρονος  
 γυναικὸς ἡμάρτηκας. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν  
 φέρειν ἀνάγκη καίπερ ὄντα δύσφορα.  
 (E. Alc. 614-17)

I have come to share in your trouble, son. You are bereft of a noble and *σωφρων* wife — there is no denying that. But these things one has to bear, even if it is hard to do so.

Pheres' compliment seems remarkably ungenerous, and at the least it almost completely ignores Admetus' strong sense of grief at the loss of his wife. To Pheres, the loss of a 'good and *σωφρων*' wife seems to be the regrettable loss of a useful thing, and little more. This lack of empathy is even more poignant, given that Admetus regards his father, or his father's wife, as a more appropriate substitute for his own death, given the fact that Alcestis was both younger and, strictly speaking, *ὀθνεῖα*, i.e. not belonging to the family in the strict sense (645, cf. *ibid.* 532-3, 810-1).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> For 'masculine' aspects of Alcestis' behaviour, notably her courage and protection of the house of Admetus, see Foley (2001) 314-7.

<sup>13</sup> In calling Alcestis an *ὀθνεῖαν γυναῖκα*, Admetus seems to be drawing the borders very strictly. At 645, he does so in order to make it clear that Pheres is closer to him than Alcestis, and should have been more willing to make the sacrifice. At 533, his claim to Heracles that the deceased is *ὀθνεῖος* is positively misleading, but motivated by the desire not to turn away his *xenos* Heracles. Alcestis remains a very atypical example of an *ὀθνεῖος*, and the servant woman's sarcastic remark at 811 does not fail to make that clear: ἡ κάρτα μέντοι καὶ λίαν ὀθνεῖος ἦν, 'no indeed, she was absolutely not one of the family, too much so'.

But nevertheless, it seems that marriage does not make for family ties in the truest sense. Again, one may compare Lys. 1, where Euphiletus claims that it is the birth of a child, rather than marriage as such, that (in principle) makes for a really strong bond between the married couple: 1.6 ἐπειδὴ δέ μοι παιδίον γίγνεται, ἐπίστευον ἤδη καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐμυτοῦ ἐκείνηι παρέδωκα, ἡγούμενος

But if Pheres' compliment is unpleasantly ungenerous, this does not mean that he is wrong to view Alcestis' sacrifice in terms of *σωφροσύνη*. In fact, Alcestis herself does much the same thing:

cē δ' ἄλλη τις γυνὴ κεκτήσεται,  
 σώφρων μὲν οὐκ ἂν μάλλον, εὐτυχὴς δ' ἴσως.  
 (E. *Alc.* 181-2)

Another wife will have you (sc. the *λέκτρον*); more *σώφρων* she can hardly be, but perhaps she will be better off.

In her own view, Alcestis is 'superlatively' *σώφρων* (no woman can surpass her on the point of loyalty to her husband), and it is her tragedy that this superlative *σωφροσύνη* means her own death. In fact, she wittingly does what Andromache in *Troades* did unwittingly: bringing about her own misfortune by her supreme loyalty with regard to her husband.

Of course, Alcestis' situation is extreme. But if she is justified in taking her self-sacrifice as a sign of (superlative) *σωφροσύνη*, it is surely significant that one Euripidean female protagonist who is definitely less blameless, Medea, is quite unwilling to sacrifice her own interests for the sake of her husband's well-being (see below, section 7). Medea of course has reasons of her own to demand something more from Jason. Hers is one of those dramas where the conflicting parties judge each other, and their possession or lack of *σωφροσύνη*, from very different points of view and on the basis of very different criteria, the tragic point being that, up to a certain point, both are right.

#### 4. *Different Views on σωφροσύνη: The Farmer in Electra*

The overview in the previous two sections has shown a considerable variety of senses of our terms. Given this variety, people can adopt very different points of view and use different criteria to decide whether, in a given situation, the term *σωφροσύνη* applies at all to a given way of behaviour. As a result people may seem to hold very different views of what *σωφροσύνη* is, and Euripides

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ταύτην οἰκειότητα μεγίστην εἶναι. ('When I got a son, I trusted her from then on, and handed over all my affairs, for I thought that this makes for the strongest possible tie.')

seems more keen than any writer before him to explore these clashes for the sake of dramatic effect. In this respect, it does indeed seem that Euripides offers something new, and the three dramas in which these clashes are most central to the plot, will concern us in the remainder of this chapter.

On one occasion, Euripides even makes a character explicitly state the fact that people use different criteria to decide on the issue of *σωφροσύνη*, and it is useful to examine this passage first. The passage that concerns us here is the close of the speech of the farmer in the prologue of *Electra*. The farmer states that, though Electra has been given to him by Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, he did not have sexual contact with her, for he considers it *ὑβρις* to do so in view of her superior status (46). He also shows concern that his 'brother in law' Orestes may, in the event of his return, be dismayed to see his sister caught in a 'miserable' marriage (47-9). The farmer thus treats Electra as a woman who is entrusted to his care but does not belong to him, and he shows a restraint similar to that of Proteus with regard to Helen (*Hel.* 47, see section 2 above), even without having been instructed to do so. The farmer clearly sees his sexual restraint and his respect for the status of his wife in terms of *σωφροσύνη*, but he is also aware that many people will not adopt such lofty criteria to judge his behaviour, and will consider him not *σώφρων* at all, but a fool:

ὅστις δέ μ' εἰναί φησι μῶρον, εἰ λαβὼν  
νέαν ἐς οἶκον παρθένον μὴ θυγάνω,  
γνώμης πονηροῖς κανόνειν ἀναμετρούμενος  
τὸ σῶφρον ἵστω καὶ τὸς αὖ τοιοῦτος ὢν.  
(*E. El.* 50-3)

Whoever says that I am a fool if I have a young girl in my house and then refrain from touching her, he must know that he uses wicked yardsticks of mentality to measure what is *σῶφρον*; and that he himself is similarly wicked.

The passage is interesting because it explicitly acknowledges the existence of radically different criteria for moral judgements. The farmer does not state *what* the 'wicked' criteria adopted by others are, but it seems clear that these others judge his behaviour on the view that it is foolish to ignore such an overt chance for sexual self-gratification: on such a view, the farmer is *μῶρος*, a

fool, if he does not take what he is offered. They judge his behaviour in terms of self-interest only. By contrast, the farmer himself claims that in ignoring the exceptional circumstances of the marriage (status difference, no authorisation by the real κύριος of the bride, cf. *El.* 259), and in advocating the ruthless pursuit of one's own interests, these people use base criteria to disparage behaviour that is, in fact, *κῶφρον* in the sense of 'self-controlled'. And for him, these people, in applying such standards, merely show that they are base themselves.

### 5. *'Hippolytus'*

It is hard to find a literary text to which the theme of *κωφροσύνη* is more central than it is to *Hippolytus*. The play shows a conflict between two main characters who both acknowledge the ideal of *κωφροσύνη*, and yet both fail to attain a complete realisation of that ideal. Hippolytus explicitly and repeatedly claims to be the very model of *κωφροσύνη* (994-5 ἐν τοῖςδ' οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἀνὴρ ἐμοῦ, | οὐδ' ἦν γὰρ μὴ φῆμι, *κωφρονέστερος γεγώς*, 'there is no man on this earth who is more *κῶφρων* than myself, even if you deny it'; cf. 1100, 1365), mainly on account of his ritual purity and total sexual abstinence, and his claim is confirmed by no less an authority than Artemis herself (1402). But Hippolytus is not only chaste in the extreme, he is also arrogantly intolerant of those who do not live up to his rigorous standards, and this gives Phaedra a good reason to say that Hippolytus still has to learn to be *κῶφρων* (731). Phaedra herself, by contrast, is incapable of controlling her desire for her stepson, and in this respect, she is incapable of *κωφροσύνη* in the sense of 'control of desires'.<sup>14</sup> But Phaedra does by no means disregard the ideals of female *κωφροσύνη*: she

<sup>14</sup> Euripides' repeated treatment of the mythological figure of Phaedra seems to have contributed greatly to the comic stereotype of Euripides the misogynist: Phaedra is named as a prototype of the Euripidean 'bad woman' at *Ar. Th.* 497, 547, 550. But in the extant play at least, she is not without redeeming features, and in fact she comes to grief through no great fault of her own. It may well be that the first *Hippolytus*, *Καλυνπτόμενος*, in which Phaedra seems to have been far more outrageously shameless, did far more than the extant play to earn Euripides his reputation as a detractor of women. See Barrett (1964) 11-12.



tries very hard to uphold at least a semblance of *σωφροσύνη* (see especially *Hipp.* 399, 413) and struggles to find a way out of her predicament with her honour intact.<sup>15</sup> Ultimately, she decides on suicide, and even Hippolytus has to acknowledge the *σωφροσύνη* of that decision (1034). As a result, the two main characters are both much concerned with *σωφροσύνη* as they see it, and the poet makes his characters employ the term in a variety of conventional and less conventional uses; the adaptability of *σωφροσύνη* is here exploited for dramatic effect more than anywhere else in Attic drama, with the possible exception of *Bacchae*.

Most important, of course, is the figure of Hippolytus himself. From the prologue onwards, he is characterized as an ardent devotee of Artemis, and an equally virulent detractor of Aphrodite (10-16), and this means that his particular brand of *σωφροσύνη* unusually and strikingly involves not only complete, religiously motivated chastity but also a marked intolerance of those who do not uphold the same ascetic standards. In the prologue, he makes the radical claim that a devotee of his kind must 'always be *σώφρων* in every respect' (80, *ἐς τὰ πάνθ' ἀεί*), and must possess this quality by nature rather than education (79). This implies that *σωφροσύνη* means rather more to him than chastity alone (though that certainly *is* the central element), and this impression is confirmed in the fullest and most straightforward exposition of his *σωφροσύνη*, which occurs in his long self-defence in the confrontation with Theseus:

πρῶτα δ' ἄρξομαι λέγειν  
 ὅθεν μ' ὑπήλθες πρῶτον ὡς διαφθερῶν  
 οὐκ ἀντιλέξοντ'. εἰς ὁρᾷς φάος τόδε  
 καὶ γαῖαν· ἐν τοῖσδ' οὐκ ἔνεστ' ἀνὴρ ἐμοῦ.  
 οὐδ' ἦν σὺ μὴ φῆις, σωφρονέστερος γεγώς. 995  
 ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ πρῶτα μὲν θεοὺς σέβειν  
 φίλοις τε χρῆσθαι μὴ ἀδικεῖν πειρωμένοις  
 ἀλλ' οἷσιν αἰδῶς μῆτ' ἐπαγγέλλειν κακὰ  
 μῆτ' ἀνθυπουργεῖν αἰσχροῖς τοῖσι χρωμένοις,  
 οὐκ ἐγγελαστῆς τῶν ὁμιλούντων, πάτερ, 1000  
 ἀλλ' αὐτὸς οὐ παροῦσι καγγυὺς ὦν φίλοις.  
 ἐνὸς δ' ἄθικτος, ὡι με νῦν ἔχειν δοκεῖς·  
 λέχους γὰρ ἐς τόδ' ἡμέρας ἀγνὸν δέμας.  
 οὐκ οἶδα πράξιν τήνδε πλὴν λόγῳ κλύων

<sup>15</sup> On Phaedra's concern for reputation, see McClure (1999) 116-19.

γραφῇ τε λεύσων· οὐδὲ ταῦτα γὰρ σκοπεῖν  
 πρόθυμός εἰμι, παρθένον ψυχὴν ἔχων.  
 καὶ δὴ τὸ σῶφρον τοῦμόν οὐ πείθει· ἴτω.  
 δεῖ δὴ σε δεῖξαι τῶι τρόπῳ διεφθάρην.  
 (E. *Hipp.* 991-1008)

I shall start to speak from the point where you first sought to trap me, where you thought you were going to destroy me without my speaking back. You see this world, the earth: there is no man there, even if you'll deny it, who is more *σῶφρων* than myself. For first of all I know how to revere the gods, and how to consort with associates who try not to do wrong, but who shun both to send evil messages and to render shameful services to those who send them. I'm not a man to mock my companions, father, but the very same to them whether they are absent or I am close to them. And there is one thing with which I have not been in touch, the very point on which you think you have trapped me: to this very day my body is undefiled by sex. I do not know these deeds except from hearsay, and from seeing it in pictures; for I am even disinclined to really *look* at these, because my soul is still a virgin. Oh well, I see that my *σωφροσύνη* does not convince you. Never mind. You must of course *prove* in which respect I've been corrupted.

Hippolytus starts his self-defence with a full exposition of his *ethos*. On account of his supposed assault on Phaedra, Theseus had openly denied the justification of his son's claims to moral superiority and *σωφροσύνη* (948-51, *ὅτι δὴ θεοῖσιν ὡς περὶ σὸς ὦν ἀνὴρ | ξύνει; ὅτι σῶφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος; | οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην τοῖσι σοῖς κόμπουσιν ἐγὼ | θεοῖσι προσθεὶς ἀμαθίαν φρονεῖν κακῶς*. 'Are you the one who is known to consort with the gods, as a superior man? Are you *σῶφρων* and untouched by evil? I could never believe your boastful claims, and therewith suppose that the gods are so ignorant as to have no good sense.'). Therefore, Hippolytus responds with an elaborate claim that he *is*, indeed, the paragon of *σωφροσύνη*.

The first part of Hippolytus' exposition combines two elements that are familiar as belonging to the conventional *σωφροσύνη* of the adult citizen. First, there is respect for the gods (996 *θεοὺς ἐβείν*), second, a concern for *δίκη* that not just prevents him from doing wrong, but even makes him avoid the company of *philoî* who are less scrupulous (997-1000). To Theseus, these may sound like conventional and rather flat claims, straight from the book of conventional aristocratic wisdom, so to

speak, but the addition that Hippolytus refuses to ‘send evil messages’ and ‘help those who do send them’ shows the audience that Hippolytus is covertly denouncing Phaedra and the nurse for their machinations: *θέουσι κέβειν* seems to hint that *he* will keep his oath of secrecy none the less.

The second part of Hippolytus’ exposition is its climax, and concerns what for Hippolytus is the pivotal element of his *σωφροσύνη*: his chastity. Restraint in sexual matters is once again, at least for a young man like Hippolytus, a recognizably conventional ideal of *σωφροσύνη* (one thinks immediately of the restraint commended in young males in texts such as *Clouds* and *Charmides*, see chapters 8.2 and 10.8), but for Hippolytus this ideal is taken to the extreme of continuous chastity, because of his devotion to Artemis. Such persistent religiously motivated asceticism, even if it is not unheard of,<sup>16</sup> is hardly what the average Greek male would call *σωφροσύνη*; it is Hippolytus’ idiosyncrasy that this enduringly ascetic lifestyle is, for him, a *sine qua non* of *σωφροσύνη*.

Thus, Hippolytus uses various conventional elements of ‘male’ and ‘juvenile’ *σωφροσύνη* in defence of his very particular view of life. The message of the entire passage is, of course, that he is not the type of man to assault Phaedra or to indulge in amorous schemings and machinations of the kind of which he thinks Phaedra is guilty; and the spectators will not fail to see that Hippolytus’ claims are quite true. But taken as a piece of rhetoric aiming to persuade Theseus of his innocence, Hippolytus’ speech is rather naïve. Theseus is by now convinced that Hippolytus’ much-vaunted *σωφροσύνη* is merely a sham. Such a conviction can never be successfully refuted by means of a full restatement of the original claim, and it seems clear that Hippolytus only takes up this naïve strategy because his oath of silence prevents him from speaking out clearly. Indeed, he is quick to see that Theseus is quite unimpressed by his elaborations (1007), and ‘desperate’ enough to adorn the next part of his self-defence — in which he argues that he cannot have had any

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. *El.* 254, where Orestes names a religious vow as a possible explanation of the farmer’s restraint versus Electra.

sound motive to assault Phaedra — with yet another appeal to *σωφροσύνη* (1013, see section 2 (2) above).

Hippolytus' idiosyncratic view of chastity as the essence of *σωφροσύνη* is even more radically expressed in the prologue, when the young man is dedicating a garland to Artemis.

Ιπ. τοὶ τόνδε πλεκτὸν στέφανον ἐξ ἀκηράτου  
 λειμῶνος, ὃ δέσποινα, κοσμήσας φέρω,  
 ἔνθ' οὔτε ποιμὴν ἀξιοὶ φέρβειν βοτὰ  
 οὔτ' ἡλθέ πω κίδηρος, ἀλλ' ἀκήρατον  
 μέλισσα λειμῶν' ἥρινῃ διέρχεται,  
 Αἰδῶς δὲ ποταμίαισι κηπένει δρόσοις,  
 ὅσοις διδακτὸν μηδὲν ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ φύσει  
 τὸ σωφρονεῖν εἴληχεν ἐς τὰ πάντ' αἰεί,  
 τούτοις δρέπεσθαι, τοῖς κακοῖσι δ' οὐ θέμις.  
 (E. *Hipp.* 73-81)

To you I bring this woven garland I have arranged, mistress, from an untouched meadow, where no farmer lets his cattle graze, and iron has never come. No, untouched is this meadow where the bee passes through in spring; and Αἰδῶς tends it with river waters, for those who have acquired nothing by means of education, but in whose nature *σωφροσύνη*, enduring and all-embracing, firmly has its place; for them to pluck; but bad men have no right to do so.

The metaphor of the 'pure' meadow, untouched by cattle or agricultural instruments, clearly stands for Hippolytus' own virginity. There is an unmistakable allusion to a fragment of lyric poetry here, Ibycus fr. 286 *PMG*, which speaks of an 'untouched garden of virgins' (3-4 *παρθένων κῆπος ἀκήρατος*), who attract the attention of, and thus are threatened by, the never-sleeping *ἔρος* of the poet (6-7 *ἐμοὶ δ' ἔρος οὐδεμίαν κατάκοιτος ὥραν*, 'My desire is at no time asleep'). This aptly parallels Hippolytus' 'virginity' under threat from the amorous attentions of Phaedra.<sup>17</sup> But even without this parallel, the audience will know what to make of the image, because it has been given the key to its interpretation by Aphrodite in the first part of the prologue. Aphrodite has told of her master plan to punish Hippolytus by making Phaedra fall in

<sup>17</sup> See Cairns (1993) 315-16.

love with him, and she has also expounded her reasons for this revenge:

ὁ γάρ με Θησέως παῖς, Ἀμαζόνος τόκος, 10  
 Ἴππόλυτος, ἄγνου Πιτθέως παιδεύματα,  
 μόνος πολιτῶν τῆςδε γῆς Τροζηνίας  
 λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι·  
 ἀναίνεται δὲ λέκτρα κοῦ ψαῦει γάμων,  
 Φοῖβου δ' ἀδελφὴν Ἀρτεμιν, Διὸς κόρην, 15  
 τιμᾶι, μεγίστην δαιμόνων ἡγούμενος,  
 χλωρὰν δ' ἄν' ὕλην παρθένωι ξυνὼν αἰεὶ  
 κυσὶν ταχείαις θήρας ἐξαιρεῖ χθονός,  
 μείζω βροτείας προσπεσὼν ὁμιλίας.  
 τοῦτοις μὲν νυν οὐ φθονῶ· τί γάρ με δεῖ; 20  
 ἃ δ' εἰς ἔμ' ἡμάρτηκε τιμωρήσομαι  
 Ἴππόλυτον ἐν τῇδ' ἡμέρᾳ·  
 (E. *Hipp.* 10-22)

The son of Theseus, borne by an Amazon, Hippolytus, who was brought up by the reverent Pittheus, is the only one among the residents of this city of Trozen to say that I am the worst of the gods. He spurns the bed and does not touch a woman. But Phoebos' sister Artemis, Zeus' daughter, he honours; he thinks she is the greatest of gods. In the green woods he is always together with the Virgin god, and with his swift-footed dogs he kills all the beasts in the land, having fallen on a superhuman companionship. Well, against them I bear no grudge. For why should I? But for his wrongs against me, I'll take revenge on Hippolytus this very day.

From this passage, it transpires that Aphrodite is offended most by Hippolytus' insults against herself (note 13 λέγει κακίστην δαιμόνων πεφυκέναι) and his intolerance of those who do not share his revulsion at all sexual matters. This is confirmed in the garland scene by his extravagant advocacy of complete (80 ἐς τὰ πάνθ'), enduring (80 αἰεὶ) and innate (79 ἐν τῇ φύσει) *σωφροσύνη*, and his rejection of all others as *κακοί* (79). This part of the garland speech provokes the unease of Hippolytus' man-servant, who admonishes Hippolytus that Aphrodite also deserves her share of honour. The young man's devotion to Artemis and his ascetism are, it seems, unobjectionable if rather unusual in themselves, but with Hippolytus these spill over into contempt for Aphrodite and for humans who do not share his ascetism. Here, Hippolytus' superlative *σωφροσύνη* borders on the very opposite of *σωφροσύνη*: an insulting arrogance vis-à-vis others. This

is Hippolytus' *ἀμαρτία* and the tragic justification of his downfall.<sup>18</sup>

Hippolytus' lack of *σωφροσύνη* in this sense is confirmed by Phaedra's last words. When the queen has made up her mind that suicide is the only way out for her, she states her intention to implicate Hippolytus in her downfall, and suggests that this will teach her stepson *σωφροσύνη* instead of his present haughtiness:

ἐγὼ δὲ Κύπριν, ἥπερ ἐξόλλυσί με,  
 ψυχῆς ἀπαλλαχθεῖσα τῇδ' ἐν ἡμέραι  
 τέρψω· πικροῦ δ' ἔρωτος ἥρσηθήσομαι.  
 ἀτὰρ κακὸν γε χιτῆρι γενήσομαι  
 θανοῦς, ἵν' εἰδῇ μὴ 'πὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς  
 ὑψηλὸς εἶναι· τῆς νόσον δὲ τῆςδέ μοι  
 κοινῇ μετασχὼν σωφρονεῖν μαθήσεται.  
 (E. *Hipp.* 725-31)

As for me, I will please Cypris, who is destroying me, by leaving life this very day. I am defeated by a bitter love. But I will be a source of trouble to another man as well by my death: may he learn not to be haughty over my misery. This illness of mine, he and I will take part in it together, and he will learn to *σωφρονεῖν*.

Phaedra herself is, of course, in an even more dubious position with regard to *σωφροσύνη*. She has fallen in love with Hippolytus, shameful enough in itself, but Phaedra is still very much concerned to save at least a semblance of *σωφροσύνη*, and is determined not to act upon her desire. She herself tells of her difficulty to find the 'best' way to deal with her illicit love:

ἐπεὶ μ' ἔρωσ ἔτρωσεν, ἐσκόπουν ὅπως  
 κάλλιστ' ἐνέγκαιμ' αὐτόν. ἡρξάμην μὲν οὖν  
 ἐκ τοῦδε, κυγὰν τήνδε καὶ κρύπτειν νόσον·  
 γλώσσει γὰρ οὐδὲν πιστόν, ἥ θυραῖα μὲν  
 φρονήματ' ἀνδρῶν νουθετεῖν ἐπίσταται,  
 αὐτὴ δ' ὑφ' αὐτῆς πλείστα κέκτηται κακά.  
 τὸ δεύτερον δὲ τὴν ἄνοιαν εὖ φέρειν  
 τῷ σωφρονεῖν νικῶσα προνοησάμην.  
 τρίτον δ', ἐπειδὴ τοιγίδ' οὐκ ἐξήνυτον  
 Κύπριν κρατῆσαι, κατθανεῖν ἔδοξέ μοι,  
 κράτιστον (οὐδεὶς ἀντερεῖ) βουλευμάτων.  
 E. *Hipp.* 392-402)

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Stinton (1975) 247-8 = (1990) 176-7.

When *erôs* had wounded me, I decided to see how best to bear it. Well, I started with this, keeping silent about this illness and hiding it. One cannot trust the tongue: it is well able to criticise the thoughts of men outside, but left to itself, it burdens itself with immense trouble. Second, I resolved to bear my madness well and keep it in check by means of *σωφροσύνη*. And then, since in these ways I did not succeed to conquer Cyprius, I thought it best to die, the strongest and best of my intentions, there is no denying that.

Phaedra's first strategy is simply to keep silent about her love, apparently without actually doing anything about it (392-7). When this does not work, she decides that she must actively fight her love, and 'conquer' it by means of her *σωφροσύνη* (398-9). On this view, *σωφροσύνη* is not the pure immunity to desire on which Hippolytus prides himself, but rather the ability to reject one's desire and the struggle to keep it in check. This *σωφροσύνη* is not the effortless purity of people who are disinclined to do wrong (Hippolytus' view of the virtue), but the hard-won achievement of those who may be very much inclined to do wrong, yet firmly restrain their desires.<sup>19</sup>

This view of *σωφροσύνη* as resistance to illicit desire, incidentally, is readily accepted by the nurse. When Phaedra has confessed her love, she is terribly shocked, but remains clear-headed enough to see that *οἱ σῶφρονες γὰρ οὐχ ἐκόντες ἀλλ' ὅμως | κακῶν ἐρώσι*, 'people who are *σῶφρονες* do not want to, but yet they cherish bad desires' (358-9).

But Phaedra soon has to acknowledge that this *σωφροσύνη* does not work for her. She then decides that if she wishes to keep her good name intact, suicide is the only way out. Her explanation of this decision confirms that her love itself was shameful, and that she could never have preserved her good name if she had succeeded in 'fighting' her desire, but had been found out to be in love:

ἐμοὶ γὰρ εἴη μήτε λανθάνειν καλὰ  
μήτ' αἰσχρὰ δρώσῃ μάρτυρας πολλοὺς ἔχειν.  
τὸ δ' ἔργον ἥϊδὲ τὴν νόσον τε δυσκλεᾶ,  
γυνή τε πρὸς τοῖσδ' οὐκ ἐγίγνωσκον καλῶς,  
μίσσημα πᾶσι·  
(E. *Hipp.* 403-7)

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Cairns (1993) 338.

For I do not wish to escape notice when I do well, nor to have many witnesses when doing wrong. And I knew that both the deed and the illness are disreputable. And moreover, I was well aware of being a woman, regarded with ill will by all.

According to Phaedra, not just the ‘deed’, but the ‘illness’, the desire, itself<sup>20</sup> brings disrepute, is *δυσκλεής*. This means that her reputation would be lost not only if she acted on her desire, but also if she did restrain it but were known to be ‘in love’. She would be regarded as a ‘bad’ woman, as not-*νώφρων*, so to speak, even if she were successful in conquering her desire by means of *νώφροσύνη* as a controlling force. Besides, she is well aware that the stereotypical view of women as inclined to faithlessness (406-9) is not to her advantage, and she curses both the female inventor of adultery, and also the hypocritical woman who is *νώφρων* (‘faithful’) in words but faithless in fact (413-4 *μικῶ δὲ καὶ τὰς νώφρονας μὲν ἐν λόγοις, | λάθραι δὲ τόλμας οὐ καλὰς κεκτημένας*, ‘I also despise those who are *νώφρονες* in words, but who in secret dare to do wrong.’).

The nurse has little patience with Phaedra’s moralising. For her, Phaedra’s love is life-threatening, and requires swift and effective action:

τί σε μνομουθεῖς; οὐ λόγων εὐχρημόνων  
 δεῖ σε ἄλλα τὰνδρός. ὥς τάχος διοιστέον,  
 τὸν εὐθὺν ἐξείποντας ἀμφὶ σοῦ λόγον.  
 εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν σοι μὴ ἰπὶ κυμοφοαῖς βίος  
 τοιαῖδε, νώφρων δ’ οὐκ ἐτύγχανες γυνή,  
 οὐκ ἂν ποτ’ εὐνῆς οὐνεχ’ ἡδονῆς τε σῆς  
 προῆγον ἂν σε δεῦρο· νῦν δ’ ἀγὼν μέγας,  
 σῶσαι βίον σόν, κοῦκ ἐπίφθονον τόδε.  
 (E. *Hipp.* 490-7)

Why these solemn words? You are not in need of decorous speech, you need the man. We must quickly make a move, speaking out the straight word about you. For if your life did not happen to be at such a risk, and if you were a *νώφρων* woman, I would not now be bringing you to this point for the sake of sex and pleasure. Now there is a big issue at stake: to save your life. That is not something to disapprove of.

<sup>20</sup> See Barrett (1964) on 405-407.



For the nurse, Phaedra is not-*νώφρων*, not in the sense of 'faithless' but in the sense that she is victim to an overpowering desire. The struggles against desire even threatens her life, and that requires immediate action: Phaedra must have 'the man' to still her desire. On the view that the nurse adopts here, *σωφροσύνη* is not something that can be attained by struggle: one either has or lacks *σωφροσύνη*, and has to accept the consequences. Phaedra, on account of her desire, is definitely not-*νώφρων*, almost a counterpart, in fact, to Hippolytus with his 'innate' purity. For the nurse, this situation overrides all concern for conventional morality.

Phaedra's, then, is a complex and paradoxical position in this play. She clearly and unequivocally falls short of the conventional ideal of the chaste and loyal *νώφρων* woman who does not have 'illicit' desires, but in spite of this she still shows herself to be much concerned with *σωφροσύνη* in her determination not to give in, and she sincerely tries to find the most honourable way out of her predicament. Even Hippolytus has to acknowledge as much, and his final comments on Phaedra's suicide concisely sum up his stepmother's ambivalent position:

ἔσωφρόνησε δ' οὐκ ἔχουσα σωφρονεῖν,  
 ἡμεῖς δ' ἔχοντες οὐ καλῶς ἐχρώμεθα.  
 (E. *Hipp.* 1034-5)

She acted wisely while not being capable of *σωφροσύνη*. I am capable of it, but did not put it to good use.

According to Hippolytus, suicide was the honourable and sensible thing to do for Phaedra, given that she was generally incapable of (true) *σωφροσύνη*. By contrast, he himself was unable to use his own superlative *σωφροσύνη* to good advantage, now that the machinations of Phaedra and the nurse have brought him into such trouble.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> There is no suggestion in the words οὐ καλῶς ἐχρώμεθα that Hippolytus is in any sense taking responsibility for his own downfall, cf. Barrett (1964) *ad loc.*: 'In οὐ καλῶς Hipp. is not of course reproaching himself for being over-censorious with Ph. ... : he is thinking of his behaviour not as wrong but as unwise.'

Phaedra and Hippolytus thus, in a sense, complement each other nicely. Hippolytus is the model of *ωφροσύνη*, but so proud of his achievement that his *ωφροσύνη* veers over into an intolerant arrogance that is the very opposite of *ωφροσύνη*. Phaedra, by contrast, is typically not-*ώφρων* because she is subject to adulterous love; but she is an unwilling victim, and shows genuine concern to find the sensible and honourable way out of her predicament. In this sense, both of them are *ώφρων* and not-*ώφρων*, and both of them confound conventional and simplistic ideals of *ωφροσύνη*.<sup>22</sup>

## 6. 'Bacchae'

Like *Hippolytus*, *Bacchae* is a play in which conflicts concerning *ωφροσύνη* are central to the plot. In the play, the supposed lack of *ωφροσύνη* of the followers of Dionysus (ecstasy, sex, alcohol) is contrasted to the more fundamental lack of *ωφροσύνη* of those who resist the god. In this sense, Pentheus is another character who is both *ώφρων* and not-*ώφρων*: he is much concerned about the morality of the Theban women, but fundamentally lacks *ωφροσύνη* in his ill-considered resistance to the god. Apart from these moral issues, the characters in the play use many terms from the cognitive domain to comment on the ra-

<sup>22</sup> This section has focused on the two main figures of *Hippolytus*. Two other passages call for passing comment. At 704, the Nurse grants the failure of her plan to approach Hippolytus with the words *οὐκ ἐωφρονοῦν ἐγώ*, 'I had no good sense to do as I did.' This has, of course, little to do with either Phaedra's or Hippolytus' *ωφροσύνη*, but serves as an acknowledgement that her scheme was not sensible, and as an attempt to end the discussion of that issue (see section 2 (2) above).

At 966, *ἀλλ' ὥς τὸ μῶρον ἀνδράσι μὲν οὐκ ἔνι, | γυναιξὶ δ' ἐμπεφυκεν*; 'but will you argue that there is no wantonness in men, but that there is in women?', the manuscripts' text is not to be altered. After arguing that Hippolytus' individual claim to *ωφροσύνη* is a sham, Theseus proceeds to argue that his son cannot have recourse to the stereotypical claim that men are *ώφρονες* and women are not. For, Theseus claims, this is not true: especially young men can be equally prone to mischief (967ff. *οἶδ' ἐγὼ νέους | οὐδὲν γυναικῶν ὄντας ἀσφαλεστέρον, | ὅταν ταραξῇ Κυπρίς ἡβῶσαν φρένα*, 'I know young men who are no less fallible than women, when Cypris disturbs a young mind.'). Reading *τὸ ὡφρον* for *τὸ μῶρον* (... adopted by Diggle in his OCT) destroys the point, and the claim *ὥς τὸ ὡφρον ἀνδράσι μὲν οὐκ ἔνι* is unlikely to be made by any Greek male, least of all Hippolytus.

tionality/sanity or madness/ecstasy of each others minds. Here, terms like (εὖ) φρονεῖν and οὐ/κακῶς φρονεῖν come into play. And finally, an important issue in the play is whether true σοφία rests with the rational/sane opponents of the Dionysiac cult, or with its ecstatic adherents. Thus the play provides for some dazzling debates in which the various parties use cognitive terms to vindicate their own good sense, soundness of mind and wisdom, and decry the lack of these on the part of their opponents.<sup>23</sup>

Pentheus suspects that the Dionysiac rituals celebrated by the Theban women are nothing but a pretext for alcoholic and sexual diversions. One important motivation for his fight ‘against’ the god Dionysus is the overriding concern for feminine fidelity he shares with many Greek males. In this respect, Pentheus is a champion of conventional, female σωφροσύνη, and whenever Pentheus is told that the σωφροσύνη of the Theban women is not impaired by the rites, the speakers mean that the women are not given to sex and alcohol, but remain decent.

οὐχ ὁ Διόνυσος σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάσει  
 γυναῖκας ἐς τὴν Κύπριν, ἀλλ’ ἐν τῇ φύσει  
 τὸ σωφρονεῖν ἔνεστιν εἰς τὰ πάντ’ αἰεί.<sup>24</sup>  
 τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή· καὶ γὰρ ἐν βακχεύμασιν

<sup>23</sup> In the following, I argue that in *Bacchae*, among many other interesting things, we find a dramatic juxtaposition of two conflicting interpretations of σωφροσύνη, as well as two types of *sophia* and of *eu/ou phronein*. My findings concerning σωφροσύνη seem entirely compatible with, and modestly supplement, the admirable interpretation of Versnel (1990) 98-205, who interprets the tragic conflict in the play as a clash between two forms of *asebeia* (*ibid.* 172-5): Dionysus-the Stranger is ἀσεβής because he introduces a new religion, Pentheus is ἀσεβής because he fights what turns out to be a very real god after all. Versnel (*ibid.* 176-7) also points to the conflict of two kinds of *sophia* in the course of the play.

<sup>24</sup> Both Murray and Diggle follow Kirchhoff and delete line 316. The reasons for doing so are: (i) its resemblance to *Hipp.* 80 τὸ σωφρονεῖν εἴληχεν ἐς τὰ πάνθ’ αἰεί and (ii) it is omitted by Stob. 4.23.8, who reads ἀλλ’ εἰς τὴν φύσιν | τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή. (Stob. 3.5.1 has the verse.) But the verse is impeccable in itself (for ἐν τῇ φύσει ... ἔνεστιν, cf. *Ba.* 269 ἐν τοῖς λόγοις δ’ οὐκ ἔνεσσι τοῖς φρένεσιν, and see Rijksbaron (1991) 54); it makes good sense (‘σωφροσύνη is not effected, or, *per implicationem* destroyed by Dionysus, no, it resides in one’s nature’); and the resemblance to *Hipp.* 80 is insufficient to warrant suspicion.

Reading ἐν τῇ φύσει | τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή (‘That resides in nature. See for yourself.’) or ἐν τῇ φύσει | τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή (‘one must look out for that in nature’) is no improvement; Stobaeus’ εἰς τὴν φύσιν τοῦτο σκοπεῖν χρή (‘One must turn to nature to look for that’) reads like a makeshift correction of a corrupted text.

οὐς' ἧ γε cώφρων οὐ διαφθαρήσεται.  
(E. Ba. 314-18)

(Tiresias:) It is not Dionysus who will force women to be sober in respect to Cypris. No, it is in one's nature that the capacity for cωφροσύνη, in every respect and always, is to be found. That you must consider; even during bacchic rites, a woman who is cώφρων will not be corrupted.

ἡῶδον δὲ πᾶσαι cώμασιν παρειμέναι,  
αἱ μὲν πρὸς ἐλάτης νῶτ' ἐρείσασαι φόβην,  
αἱ δ' ἐν δρυὸς φύλλοις πρὸς πέδωι κάρα  
εἰκῇ βαλοῦσαι cωφρόνως, οὐχ ὥς cὺ φῆς  
ὠινωμένας κρατῆρι καὶ λωτοῦ ψόφωι  
θηρᾶν καθ' ὕλην Κύπριν ἡρημωμένας.  
(E. Ba. 683-8)

(First Messenger:) They all slept, their bodies quite relaxed, some lying on their backs on pine's needles, others had rested their head on oak leaves; scattered about, but *sôphronôs*. They were not, as you allege, drunk on wine and flute music and did not go out in the woods on their own to hunt for love.

ἧ ποῦ με τῶν cῶν πρῶτον ἡγήσῃ φίλων,  
ὅταν παρὰ λόγον cώφρονας βάκχας ἴδῃς.  
(E. Ba. 939-40)

(Dionysus in disguise to Pentheus:) I dare say that you will count me as the first among your allies, when, against your expectation, you will find the bacchic women to be cώφρονες.

In this respect, then, Pentheus is wrong. The women in the mountains *are* cώφρονες in the sense that they do not practice extra-marital sex. In other respects, however, they are hardly cώφρονες, and if this is not stated explicitly anywhere, it becomes abundantly clear from the messenger speeches and from the final scene. The women are — intermittently, at least — in a state of divine ecstasy, and thus *per implicationem* not cώφρονες in that they are not in a normal frame of mind. In this state, they are also capable of extreme violence, including the *cπαραγμός* of Pentheus himself. Thus, where we are told that the women are cώφρονες on one level, and have no reason to doubt that, we witness that they are not cώφρονες on another, no less disturbing, level.

Pentheus himself is also an intriguing mix of good common sense and, ultimately, utter lack of cωφροσύνη. For while his con-

cern for the *σωφροσύνη* of the bacchic women seems reasonable enough, he is not *σώφρων* himself in two respects: most importantly, he utterly fails to recognise that Dionysus is indeed a god, and thus offends divinity, and, on a more mundane level, he is unable to control his anger and keep calm at the provocations of the worshippers of the new god.<sup>25</sup>

Most important is his failure to acknowledge Dionysus' divine status, and the bitter fight against the god that is connected with this lack of insight. He initially shares this with all the members of the royal house: Agaue and her sisters are entirely unwilling to accept Dionysus, but are forced to do so when the women of Thebes are driven out of their houses in ecstasy, and if Cadmus is a less involuntary convert, he remains a convert for opportunistic reasons.

Thus, whenever the lack of *σωφροσύνη* of the members of the royal family is addressed, the point is that they fail to honour the god Dionysus.

τὸ σωφρονεῖν δὲ καὶ céβειν τὰ τῶν θεῶν  
κάλλιστον· οἶμαι δ' αὐτὸ καὶ σοφώτατον  
θνητοῖσιν εἶναι κτῆμα τοῖσι χρωμένοις  
(E. Ba. 1150-2)

(The second messenger, drawing the 'moral' from his story of Pentheus' destruction:) Being *σώφρων* and respecting all matters divine is best. I think it is also the wisest possession for those who practice it.

ταῦτ' οὐχὶ θνητοῦ πατρὸς ἐκγεγώς λέγω  
Διόνυσος ἀλλὰ Ζηνός· εἰ δὲ σωφρονεῖν  
ἔγνωθ', ὅτ' οὐκ ἠθέλετε, τὸν Διὸς γόνον  
ἠὺδαιμονεῖτ' ἂν σύμμαχον κεκτημένοι.  
(E. Ba. 1340-3)

(Dionysus, at the end of his speech to Cadmus:) This is what I, Dionysus, being the son not of a mortal father, but of Zeus, have to say. If you had had the insight to be *σώφρονες*, when you were not prepared to do so, you would have enjoyed good fortune, having the son of Zeus as your ally.

<sup>25</sup> The treatment of Leinieks (1996) 252-6 suffers from reducing the conflicting interpretations of *σωφροσύνη* to the single, under-descriptive notion of 'discipline'.

The striking thing here is that the γνώμαι of the second messenger are confirmed, with direct and explicit reference to Cadmus and the Theban royal family, by the god Dionysus in the *exodos* of the play. For the common man, who is not immediately involved in the drama, as well as — of course — for the god himself, there can be no doubt that Pentheus and his kin were wrong to deny the divinity of Dionysus.

Thus it is no surprise to see that, conversely, Tiresias is credited with *σωφροσύνη* by the chorus after singing the praise of Dionysus to Pentheus: he is *σώφρων* to honour Bromios, and in doing so does not detract from the honour of the 'old' god Apollo.

Χο. ὦ πρέσβυ, Φοῖβόν τ' οὐ καταισχύνεις λόγοις,  
τιμῶν τε Βρόμιον σωφρονεῖς, μέγαν θεόν.  
(E. Ba. 348-9)

Dear Sir, your words are no disgrace to Phoebus, and you show *σωφροσύνη* by honouring Bromios, a mighty god.

Unlike Pentheus, Tiresias *does* recognise the divine status of Dionysus, and acknowledges the *τιμή* of this 'mighty' god.

In connection with his hybriatic<sup>26</sup> failure to acknowledge Dionysus' divinity, however, Pentheus is also not-*σώφρων* on a more mundane level. From his very first entry (214 ὡς ἐπτόηται, 'how excited he is'), Pentheus is barely in control of his anger,<sup>27</sup> and his agitation strongly contrasts with the composure of the divine stranger.

Δι. αὐδῶ με μὴ δεῖν, σωφρονῶν οὐ σώφροσιν.  
Πε. ἐγὼ δὲ δεῖν γε, κυριώτερος ἐθέειν.  
(E. Ba. 504-5)

(Dionysus in disguise:) I order not to bind me, speaking as man who is *σώφρων* to men who are not. (Pentheus:) And I order to bind you, I have more authority than you.

Dionysus the Stranger here drives home the point that Pentheus and his men are aggressive, whereas he himself remains almost

<sup>26</sup> For Pentheus' and the Cadmeans' dishonouring ὕβρις against Dionysus, see 375, 516, 555, 1297, 1347. Conversely, Pentheus regards the subversive activities of the Stranger and his βακχαί as ὕβρις (247, 779), and Dionysus in disguise describes the humiliating delusion he casts on Pentheus in similar terms (616 καθύβρις αὐτόν).

<sup>27</sup> On anger control, cf. Harris (2001), Allen (2000), esp. 58-9.

uncannily calm. The spectators will also see that Pentheus is also not-*νώφρων* in the sense that he tries to imprison a god, and thus offends divinity. Thus *οὐ νόφροσιν* is doubly relevant for the spectators, even though Pentheus himself will, at this stage, only take it as a slight on his aggression.

ῥαιδίως γὰρ αὐτὸν οἶσω, κἂν πνέων ἔλθῃ μέγα·  
πρὸς σοφοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἀσκεῖν νόφρον' εὐοργησίαν.  
(E. Ba. 640-641)

(Dionysus in disguise:) I will deal with him easily, even if he will make a great fuss. It's the mark of a clever man to preserve a *νώφρων* quiet temper.

Here again, Dionysus the Stranger is *νώφρων* because, unlike Pentheus, he is not given to fear and anger. By his lack of *νωφροσύνη* in the sense of 'control of anger', Pentheus acquires traits of the irascible tyrant, always a less than ideal figure in tragedy,<sup>28</sup> and loses the 'good sense' ideally associated with male *νωφροσύνη*.

Thus, in *Bacchae*, all human protagonists arguably both have and lack *νωφροσύνη*: the Theban women are not faithless, but they are ecstatic and downright violent; Pentheus claims to be sensible, but he is in fact both irascible and totally blind to the fact that he offends a god. And even Dionysus in his guise of mortal stranger is, in his appearance, both *νώφρων* and not-*νώφρων*. He is criticised by Pentheus for his effeminate appearance (455-8, 493) and for corrupting women (454, 459, 487), and in this respect, he seems not-*νώφρων*, but, as we have seen, he at least manages to keep calm where his adversary Pentheus loses his temper.<sup>29</sup>

The spectators are obviously expected to relish the paradoxes. To add to the complexity, the protagonists of the play also frequently comment on other aspects of each other's state of mind and cognitive abilities. We may distinguish two main themes

<sup>28</sup> Compare, for instance, Eteocles' aggression in the last scene of A. *Th.*, Aegisthus' anger at the chorus in the final scene of *Agamemnon*, or the anger of Oedipus with Tiresias and Creon in *OT*. If this irascibility already falls short of ideally worthy behaviour, his 'degradation' is completed when, in 912ff., he appears in women's clothes in order to spy on the βακχαί.

<sup>29</sup> The choral verse 1002, corrupt beyond hope, is not dealt with here.

here: (i) delusion versus good sense, mostly described by expressions such as (εὖ) φρονεῖν (the verb *σωφρονεῖν* is *not* used in this sense in the play: *σωφρων* and cognates are used only with reference to the moral and religious issues in the play), and (ii) wicked cleverness versus real 'wisdom', both described by *σοφία* and cognates.

(i) The cult of Dionysus being the ecstatic and 'non-rational' rite that it is, his devotees are obviously in an 'abnormal' state of mind. The full measure of delusion to which the *βακχαί* are subjected appears from the second messenger speech and the entrance of Agaue, who during the killing of Pentheus 'does not think as one should' (1123 οὐ φρονούς' ἂν χρὴ φρονεῖν), lacks perception of what she has done (1259-60 φρονήσασαι μὲν οἱ ἐδράσατε | ἀλγήσεται ἄλγος δεινόν, 'if you will realise what you have done, you'll suffer terrible woe'), and is only gradually brought back to her former normal state of mind (1269-70 γίγνομαι δέ πως | ἔννουσ, μετασταθεῖσα τῶν πάρος φρενῶν, 'I am somehow coming to my senses, taking leave of my former state of mind.').

But in its more innocent manifestations, the unfamiliar cult also provokes considerable human unease. This is notably the case in the scene with Cadmus and Tiresias: they are the only men in Thebes to join in the worship of Dionysus, and the old king is understandably apprehensive that people will think him a fool. Thus, Tiresias has to reassure him that *they* are the only ones to have 'good sense' (196, μόνοι γὰρ εὖ φρονούμεν, οἱ δ' ἄλλοι κακῶς). The two old men thus seemingly act like fools, but in fact have 'wisdom' on their side as compared to the other men.

Conversely, Pentheus in spite of his agitation has at least the semblance of reason and rationality as compared to these two dancing old men, but in as far as he completely disregards Dionysus, his apparent good sense completely misses the point and is indeed no good sense at all. Both Tiresias and Cadmus insistently drive the paradox home to him:

cὺ δ' εὖτροχον μὲν γλῶσσαν ὥς φρονῶν ἔχεις,  
 ἐν τοῖς λόγοις δ' οὐκ ἔνειμί σοι φρένες.  
 (E. Ba. 268-9)

(Tiresias:) You have a well-versed tongue as a man of sense, but in your words there is no sense at all.



μηδ', ἣν δοκῆις μέν, ἣ δὲ δόξα σου νοσῆι,  
φρονεῖν δόκει τι·  
(E. Ba. 311-2)

(Tiresias:) ... and do not, if you have an opinion, but that opinion of yours is ill, think that you have any sense.

οἴκει μεθ' ἡμῶν, μὴ θύραζε τῶν νόμων·  
νῦν γὰρ πέττει τε καὶ φρονῶν οὐδὲν φρονεῖς.  
(E. Ba. 331-2)

(Cadmus:) Do dwell with us, not on the outside of our customs. For now you are in the air, and for all your reason have no good sense at all.

μέμνηας ἤδη, καὶ πρὶν ἐξέστως φρενῶν.  
(E. Ba. 359)

(Tiresias:) You're mad beyond cure now. Even before you were out of your mind.

Thus Pentheus, for all his apparent rationality, is completely wrong to fight the 'ecstatic' βακχαί. But in these scenes at least, Pentheus is still in a more or less normal frame of mind. That is changed by Dionysus, who drives him out of his mind in order to persuade him to spy on the βακχαί in women's dress:

Διώνυσε, νῦν σὸν ἔργον· οὐ γὰρ εἰ πρόσω·  
τεινώμεθ' αὐτόν. πρῶτα δ' ἐκστῆσον φρενῶν,  
ἐνείς ἐλαφρὰν λύσσαν· ὥς φρονῶν μὲν εὖ  
οὐ μὴ θελήσει θῆλυν ἐνδύναι στολήν,  
ἔξω δ' ἐλαύνων τοῦ φρονεῖν ἐνδύσεται  
(E. Ba. 849-53)

Dionysus, this is now your work: I know you're not far off. Let us punish him. First, drive him out of his mind, by inducing a giddy madness. For in his right mind, he will never agree to put on a woman's dress, but if out of his normal state of mind, he will.

Thus, whereas *νώφρων* and *νωφρονεῖν* deal with some of the main 'moral' aspects of the drama (respect for the gods, taboos on illicit sex and Pentheus' emotionalism), expressions like (*εὖ*) *φρονεῖν* and *οὐ φρονεῖν* are used to focus on the various states of mind of the characters in the play, whether 'normal'/'rational' versus 'ecstatic' or 'right'/'sensible' versus 'wrong'/'unreasonable'.

(ii) Beside all this, there is the opposition of wicked cleverness versus 'real' wisdom, being, in this particular play, 'real' insight in matters divine. Both are described by *σοφός* and cognates.<sup>30</sup> As *σοφός* is a term most typically used for 'experts' in various types of arts, crafts and knowledge, in the context of this play it is applied to the expert who has insight in religious matters, notably Tiresias (179 bis, 186) and Dionysus the Stranger, who has to conclude that 'words of insight' fall flat if spoken to someone who completely lacks this kind of insight, like Pentheus<sup>31</sup> (480 *δόξει τις ἀμαθεί σοφὰ λέγων οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν*, 'If one speaks words of insight to a man who knows nothing, one will seem to have no sense.').

But just as there is a contrast in the play between 'apparent good sense' (as exemplified by Pentheus) and 'real good sense' (as shown by the worshippers of Dionysus), there is also a contrast between 'ill-founded, apparent' *σοφία* and 'real' *σοφία*. The former is the *σοφία* of the 'clever' man who uses this cleverness to ill effect. For Tiresias, this is the man who invents clever rationalisations that detract from the status of the gods (200 *οὐδ' ἐνσοφίζόμεθα τοῖσι δαίμοσιν*, 'and we do not invent clever reasonings against the gods', cf. 203). For Pentheus, by contrast, the bad *σοφός* is Dionysus the Stranger, who shows considerable cleverness in defending his wicked religion (e.g. 489 *δίκην σε δοῦναι δεῖ σοφισματῶν κακῶν*, 'you have to be punished for your bad reasonings').<sup>32</sup> Thus when Pentheus states that his prisoner is clever in every aspect, but lacks insight in essential matters, the Stranger, being a god and thus an expert in religious matters, is able to retort that he is especially *σοφός* in the field where it matters most:

Πε. σοφὸς σοφὸς σύ, πλὴν ἃ δεῖ σ' εἶναι σοφόν.  
 Δι. ἃ δεῖ μάλιστα, ταῦτ' ἔγωγ' ἔφυν σοφός.  
 (E. Ba. 655-6)

<sup>30</sup> For the conflicting views on *σοφία* in this play, cf. Versnel (1990), 176-7 with references to older literature, and Oranje (1984) 159-64.

<sup>31</sup> For Pentheus' utter lack of insight/expertise in religious matters, see 490 *σε δ' ἀμαθίας γε* [sc. *δίκην δίδοναι δεῖ*] *καεβοῦντ' ἐς τὸν θεόν*.

<sup>32</sup> Characteristically, Pentheus' appreciation of the Stranger changes appreciably when the latter leads him to the mountains to spy on the *βακχαί*. At 824, *ὥς τις εἶ πάλαι σοφός* is a complementary remark on the Stranger's prudent foresight.

(Pentheus:) You are a clever, clever man, except in that respect in which *σοφία* is required. (Dionysus:) Where it is required especially, in that respect *I am σοφός*.

The paradox of this contrast between (apparent) *σοφία* and (real) *σοφία* is succinctly formulated by the chorus in the phrase *τὸ σοφὸν δ' οὐ σοφία* (395), 'being clever is no (true) insight'.

*Bacchae* thus plays a virtuoso game with the paradoxes connected with the various ways in which people respond to a new and disturbing religion. A whole apparatus of 'mental' terminology is used to deal with various aspects of its protagonists' 'mentalities'. Whereas *σώφρων* and cognates focus on the 'moral' issues of the play (chastity, respect for the gods, control of anger), (*εὖ*) *φρονεῖν* and *οὐ φρονεῖν* and the like are used in connection with the paradoxical states of mind of the god's adherents and his detractors: Pentheus was found to be 'sensible' and yet 'not sensible'; the opposite goes for the god's adherents. *σοφός* and *σοφία* finally play on the contrast between mere 'cleverness' and 'real' insights in religious matters. The god himself does not, of course, come in for judgement of his behaviour in human terms, except when, in his disguise as a human follower of Dionysus, he reacts quietly and submissively to the aggression of his opponent.

### 7. 'Medea'

In *Medea* too, we witness a conflict between two protagonists who, from different points of view, both possess and lack *σωφροσύνη*. Here, the issues are rather more complicated, and that is the reason why we will deal with this play last.

For Medea herself, *σωφροσύνη* is an issue not in connection with the cruel killing of her children (unequivocally an *ἔργον δυσσεβέστατον*, according to Jason, *Med.* 1328), but concerning the question whether she is right to take offence at Jason's marriage to the Corinthian princess. For Medea, Jason is a betrayer, oblivious to all that she has done for him,<sup>33</sup> but Jason thinks oth-

<sup>33</sup> Medea herself describes Jason as a *προδότης* oblivious of the past services of his former *φίλοι*, thereby employing norms that apply to the interaction

erwise. In their first confrontation, Jason accuses Medea of *μωρία*, both because she does not stop her accusations against Creon (457f *οὐκ ἀνίεις μωρίας, λέγους' αἰὲ | κακῶς τυράν- νους*) and because she refuses to see that this marriage is the best way to secure the position of her children (614 *καὶ ταῦτα μὴ θέλονσα μωρανεῖς, γύναι*): Jason attributes Medea's anger to sexual jealousy (568-73), rather than to his own lack of loyalty (Medea's charge against him: 488-98). Later on, when Medea makes her feigned excuses, Jason readily welcomes her new-found *σωφροσύνη*:

ἀλλ' ἐς τὸ λῶιον σὸν μεθέστηκεν κέαρ,  
ἔγνωσ δὲ τὴν νικῶσαν, ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ,  
βουλήν· γυναικὸς ἔργα ταῦτα σῶφρονος.  
(E. *Med.* 911-13)

But your heart made a change for the better, and you have recognised, although it took some time, the plan that wins. These are the deeds of a *σῶφρων* woman.

For Jason, Medea now seems to be the good Greek wife, who does not oppose her husband's plans, but sees that his will is best. The indulgence she now shows in fact strongly reminds one of the indulgence of Andromache with regard to Hector's paramours (*Andr.* 222-231, see section 3 above).<sup>34</sup>

The final discussion between Jason and Medea shows that Jason did indeed expect a *σῶφρων* wife to put up with his second marriage:

Ια. οὗτοι νιν ἡμῇ δεξιά γ' ἀπώλεσεν.  
Μη. ἀλλ' ὕβρις οἷ τε σοὶ νεοδμήτες γάμοι.  
Ια. λέχους σφε κηξίωσας οὐνεκα κτανεῖν;  
Μη. σμικρὸν γυναικὶ πῆμα τοῦτ' εἶναι δοκεῖς;  
Ια. ἥτις γε σῶφρων· σοὶ δὲ πάντ' ἐστὶν κακά.  
(E. *Med.* 1365-9)

*Jason*: It is not *my* hand that killed them. *Medea*: No, it was your *ὑβρις* and the new wife you took. *Jason*: Did you actually think it

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between two male *φίλοι*, but not so readily to the bond between a man and his wife. On this position of Medea, which is understandable, but problematic from the point of view of Greek convention, see Palmer (1957), and Sicking (1998), 63-76. Below I hope to show that Medea's behaviour is problematic from the viewpoint of conventional notions of *σωφροσύνη*, as much as she is a difficult figure in her idiosyncratic view of *φιλία*.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Mastronarde (2002) ad 913.

worthwhile killing them for the sake of our bed? *Medea*: Do you think that is a small grief to a woman? *Jason*: Yes, if she is *νώφρων*. You, however, take offence at everything.

This is in fact the same norm by which Andromache is 'right' to put up with Hector's paramours, and Hermione 'wrong' to plot against Andromache (see section 3 on *Andr.*). Again, we see how Jason connects Medea's lack of acquiescence to an obsession with sex (*λέχους*, 1367): he stubbornly views Medea's anger in terms of the jealousy of the stereotypically sex-obsessed woman.

Still, regardless of the issue of *έρως*, it seems no eccentricity from the Greek point of view that Jason demands Medea's acquiescence. And in fact, the same norm finds a fuller expression in the choral ode that follows on the first confrontation between Jason and Medea. In the first strophe, the chorus dwell on the disastrous effect that strong *erôs* has on men,<sup>35</sup> but in the antistrophe their thoughts turn to Medea, and they pray that they may never find themselves in a situation in which they might react in a similarly vehement way to a new liaison.

Χο. ἔρωτες ὑπὲρ μὲν ἄγαν ἐλθόντες οὐκ εὐδοξίαν      627-8  
οὐδ' ἀρετὰν παρέδωκαν ἀνδράσιν· εἰ δ' ἄλλος ἔλθοι      629-30  
Κύπρις, οὐκ ἄλλα θεὸς εὐχαρις οὕτω.  
μή ποτ', ὦ δέσποινα, ἐπ' ἐμοὶ χρυσέων τόξων ἀφείη  
ἰμέρωι χρίσας ἄφυκτον οἰστόν.      635

στέργοι δέ με σωφροσύνα, δώρημα κάλλιστον θεῶν  
μηδέ ποτ' ἀμφιλόγους ὀργὰς ἀκόρεστά τε νείκη  
θυμὸν ἐκπλήξας ἐτέρους ἐπὶ λέκτροις      640-1  
προςβάλοι δεινὰ Κύπρις, ἀπτολέμους δ' εὐνὰς σεβίζουσ'  
ὀξύφρων κρίνοι λέχη γυναικῶν.  
(E. *Med.* 627-44)

Whenever *erôs* comes with too strong a force, it does not bring good fame or *aretê* for a man. But if Cypris comes in due measure, there is no more graceful god than she. Never, o mistress, fire at me from your golden bow the inescapable arrow that is anointed with desire.

May *sôphrosyna* remain faithful to me, the fairest gifts from the god. May awesome Cypris never send me quarrelsome tempers

<sup>35</sup> The chorus seem to have Jason's marriage to the princess in mind, and seem to agree with Medea's view that Jason was motivated by desire (cf. 491, 623-4). It seems justified here to take *ἀνδράσιν* (630) as 'men' rather than 'humans' in general (Mastrorade *ad loc.*), see Rademaker (forthcoming).

and insatiate strife, and upset me over an extraneous affair. May she respect peaceful liaisons, and so sharply judge the partnerships of women.

The antistrophe is commonly taken to mean that the women pray that they may remain *ώφρονες* and never conceive the desire for another man. This interpretation depends on taking line 640, *θυμόν ἐκπλήξας' ἑτέροις ἐπὶ λέκτροις*, to mean 'making my heart aflame for a love other than my husband's'.<sup>36</sup> But with a verb that describes a mental state or emotion (*ἐκπλήξασα*), *ἑτέροις ἐπὶ λέκτροις* means 'because of another bed' rather than 'in desire of another love';<sup>37</sup> the expression then refers to the type of liaison at which Medea was so gravely upset only moments ago, and which we have already seen to provoke 'quarrelsome tempers' and 'insatiable strife'. What the ladies pray for, is that Cypris may distinguish sharply (644) between marriages that are peaceful (*ἀπολέμους ... εὐνάς*), such as their own, and those that are not, and that she may refrain from disturbing the former. Thus, they hope that they will never be in a situation where they might stir up quarrels in anger at a 'faithless' husband; the *ωφροσύνα* which they wish to keep is the peace at home, in which they have no cause for quarrel.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Page ad loc., cf. Valgiglio (1957) ad loc.: 'colpirmi l'animo col desiderio di un talamo altrui'.

<sup>37</sup> For *ἐπί* + dat. indicating a 'cause' or 'occasion' in expressions of 'emotions' and 'mental affection', see LSJ s.v. *ἐπί* B.III.1, K.-G. I 502, and cf. E. *Hipp.* 686 *σιγᾶν ἐφ' οἷσι νῦν κακύνομαι*, *ibid.* 903 *τὸ μέντοι πράγμ' ὅτῳι στένει ἐπὶ οὐκ οἶδα*.

It is true that *ἐπί* + dat. can indicate a result or purpose, but this use occurs in descriptions of events and actions rather than emotions. Cf. E. *Hipp.* 511-2 *αὐτ' ἐπ' αἰσχροῖς οὐτ' ἐπὶ βλάβῃ φρενῶν | παύσει νόσον τῆςδ'*, and see the examples quoted by K.-G. I 502-3, e.g. *ἐπὶ δόρπῳ* (*Od.* 18.44) or *ἐπὶ κακῶι ἀνθρώπου κυδῆρος ἀνέυρηται* (*Hdt.* 1.68).

Cf. Meridor (1986), Rademaker (forthcoming).

<sup>38</sup> According to North (1966) 73-4, it is Medea who is said to be subject to 'too strong *erôs*', not the 'cold, calculating' Jason; on this reading both strophe and antistrophe are addressing Medea's case. But (i) this is not likely in view of *ἀνδράειν* in the strophe; (ii) it is not confirmed by *τέργοι δέ* which suggests that the antistrophe will bring a new point rather than the exact obverse of that of the strophe (for which one rather needs *ἀλλά*); (iii) it is unlikely in view of the context of the play: throughout it is understood that Medea was indeed strongly 'in love' with Jason (8, 350) when she saved him and followed him from Colchis (her perturbed state of mind thus explaining her lack of loyalty to her own *φίλοι*), but there is absolutely no suggestion that her present distress is

Thus Medea falls short in *σωφροσύνη* in the sense that she can not reconcile herself to Jason's new marriage. But she herself has a charge against Jason too, and Jason unsuccessfully tries to persuade her that his marriage was by no means base betrayal, but, on the contrary, the sensible thing to do (*Med.* 548-50 *ἐν τῷιδε δείξω πρῶτα μὲν σοφὸς γεγώς, | ἔπειτα σώφρων, εἰτά σοι μέγας φίλος | καὶ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσιν*, 'In this, I will show you first that I am clever, second that I am *σώφρων*, and third that I am most loyal to you and to my children'). Jason claims to act in the interest of his own *οἶκος*, and he resolutely denies any erotic desire for his new bride; as such, his behaviour can indeed be evaluated not only in terms of *σοφία* and *φιλία*, but also in terms of *σωφροσύνη*, and in this sense he is right to claim that he was clever, in control of his desire, and a great *φίλος* to Medea and her children.

It is this notion of *σωφροσύνη* as unobjectionable behaviour that Medea addresses when she tries to convince both Jason and Creon that she is no longer angry with them. In turn, she praises both for their *σωφροσύνη*.

οὐχ ὧδ' ἔχει μοι, μὴ τρέσῃς ἡμᾶς, Κρέον,  
 ὥστ' ἐς τυράννουσ ἀνδρας ἐξαμαρτάνειν.  
 σὺ γὰρ τί μ' ἠδίκηκας; ἐξέδου κόρην  
 ὅττωι σε θυμὸς ἤγεν. ἀλλ' ἐμὸν πόσιν  
 μισῶ· σὺ δ', οἶμαι, σωφρονῶν ἔδρας τάδε.  
 καὶ νῦν τὸ μὲν σὺν οὐ φθονῶ καλῶς ἔχειν·  
 νυμφεύετ', εὖ πράσσοιτε· τήνδε δὲ χθόνα  
 ἑατέ μ' οἰκεῖν. καὶ γὰρ ἠδικοημένοι  
 ciγητόμεσθα, κρεῖσσόνων νικώμενοι.  
 (E. *Med.* 307-315)

(To Creon:) My situation is not such — Don't be afraid of me, Creon! — that I might do wrong against a king. After all, what have you done to do me wrong? You gave your daughter to the man you wanted. No, it is my husband against whom I bear a grudge. You on the other hand, I suppose, were *σώφρων* to act as you did. And now I don't begrudge the fact that your affairs are

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due to 'love' rather than anger at the fact that Jason does not keep his part of the deal.

As for Jason, Medea does indeed accuse him of strong, and inappropriate *ἔρως* for the Corinthian princess (330, 491, 697-8), and Jason denies the charge at 555-6; the ladies of the chorus here seem to share her view on the matter.

well-arranged. Enjoy the wedding, and good luck to you. But let me live in this country. I have been wronged, and yet I will keep quiet: I'll let the stronger win.

ταῦτ' ἐννοηθεῖς' ἡμισθόμην ἀβουλίαν  
πολλήν ἔχονσα καὶ μάτην θυμουμένη.  
νῦν οὖν ἐπαινῶ σωφρονεῖν τέ μοι δοκεῖς  
κῆδος τόδ' ἡμῖν προσλαβών, ἐγὼ δ' ἄφρων,  
ἢ χρὴν μετεῖναι τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων  
καὶ συμπεραίνειν καὶ παρεστάναι λέχει  
νύμφην τε κηδεύουσιν ἥδεσθαι céθεν.  
(E. Med. 882-8)

(To Jason:) When I thought of all this, I was aware that I was very much ill-advised and had no reason to be angry. Now, as I say, I consent, and I think that you were *σώφρων* to acquire this additional family tie for us. I, however, was stupid. I should have joined in making these plans, and help you to carry them out. I should have stood over this bed, and have been happy to attend your bride.

Medea pretends to agree that Jason and Creon are both doing what is best for their *οἶκος*. The *σωφροσύνη* with which Medea credits them is very much the 'prudence' of the free adult male who takes good care of the interests of himself and those that depend on him.

But these passages are hardly a matter of fact acceptance of the men's merits; both have a strong rhetorical flavour. Medea, who is known to have been very much offended by the marriage, now pretends that she takes no offence at the behaviour of her addressees. 'You were *σώφρων* to do as you did' here amounts to the suggestion 'I see you had a good reason to act as you did, and do not think (any longer) that you did anything offensive'. This seems an almost patronizing attitude on Medea's part, who shows once again that she is not the meek and submissive Greek woman that the norm envisages.

These passages, then, highlight the more problematical aspects of Medea's behaviour. In the earlier stages of the play (before her decision to kill her children, that is), there is little doubt that she is understandably distressed at Jason's lack of loyalty and her own exile; the sympathetic reaction of the Corinthian women leaves no doubt about that, and the one male who is not directly involved in the Corinthian affairs, Aigeus, consents that



it is 'excusable' (συγγνωστά, 703) for her to be offended at the marriage, and that he does not approve of her exile either (707 οὐδὲ ταῦτ' ἐπὶήνεκα). But however right she may be, Medea's behaviour, even long before the murder of the children, is highly problematical from the point of view of conventional female *σωφροσύνη*. Jason may well be wrong to attribute Medea's anger and revenge to ἔρως; in this respect, Medea may not be not the archetypically not-*σώφρων* woman for which Jason seems to take her. But he seems to have a point when he demands her acquiescence: in this respect, Medea does *not* live up to the ideal of female *σωφροσύνη*. As for Jason, he may be *σώφρων* and *σοφός* in his concern for the well-being of his οἶκος, as he himself claims. But it is also possible to regard his behaviour as motivated by desire, as both Medea and the chorus seem to do. According to the point of view one adopts, then, Jason may also be regarded as *σώφρων* or not-*σώφρων*.

### 8. Conclusion

Euripides uses *σώφρων* and cognates in a conspicuously greater range of sense than any of his predecessors. (For a visualisation of the network connections between the main uses, see Fig. 7 in chapter 9.3) These include a 'sane' state of mind, 'prudence'/'good sense', 'respect for the gods', 'control of aggression and violence', and 'control of desire'. (Section 3.) With regard to women, Euripidean drama is a very full source on the ideology of female *σωφροσύνη*, which centres on 'marital fidelity', but also includes quiet and inconspicuous behaviour, obedience to, and indulgence of, one's husband, and (in the case of Alcestis) even self-sacrifice. Euripides' plays show a whole range of exemplary women (Andromache, Alcestis, the *παρθένος*) and rather less blameless ones (Hermione, Helena, Clytemnestra, Phaedra, and, most complex of all, Medea).

A remarkable feature of Euripidean tragedy is that the poet fully exploits the dramatic possibilities inherent in the juxtaposition of two strongly contrasted views of *σωφροσύνη*. On a small scale, the farmer's remarks in *El.* (section 4) show an acute awareness that people adopt different standards to judge a given

line of behaviour ('good and bad standards' to measure *σωφροσύνη*), and then may use strongly contrasted terms in their judgements.

On a larger scale too, Euripides makes full dramatic capital out of these clashes of opinion. The extremist 'purity' of a Hippolytus (section 5) is contrasted with the *σωφροσύνη* of Phaedra, who is incapable of such 'inner' purity but tries very hard at least to control her desire (and both contrast yet again to the cynical pragmatism of the nurse). Pentheus (section 6) acts as a fanatic protector of the *σωφροσύνη* of the maenads whom he suspects of illicit sex, but is himself not in control of his anger, and fatally blind to the fact that he offends the god Dionysus. Medea (section 7) is understandably offended by Jason's lack of loyalty and his desire for his new bride, and she only pretends to acknowledge his 'prudent' care (*σωφροσύνη*) for his *φίλοι*, yet in her fierce protest and revenge, she also violates an ideal of *σωφροσύνη*: the norm of the quiet and obedient Greek woman.

Euripides being the dramatic poet he is, he is careful to make these clashes sufficiently obvious in order to make them register with a mass audience. In this sense, the manner in which Euripidean characters 'manipulate' *σωφροσύνη* ideally complements that of philosophical texts like the Platonic dialogues, in which the same polysemy of the terms is exploited in a way that is more covert, more subtle and potentially infinitely more 'manipulative'.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### HISTORIOGRAPHY

#### 1. *Introduction*

The tragedians tend to use *σώφρων* and cognates predominantly in connection with great issues of other-regarding morality (how human beings should deal with their fellows and the gods). In the historians, a different type of use predominates. Here, the terms are used mostly by speakers in council, debating the pros and cons of a certain policy; and speakers will invoke *σωφροσύνη* sometimes to argue that their addressees should observe their moral duties with regard to others, but much more often to suggest that they should observe their own self-interest. This means that the use of *σώφρων* to commend ‘well-advised good sense’ or ‘prudence’ is much more prominent in the works of the historians than it is in tragedy. It is the predominant sense in Herodotus, whereas in Thucydides, speakers both use arguments of self-interest and arguments of responsibility versus others, and the two are often juxtaposed in a telling way (e.g. in the debate between Archidamus and Sthenelaïdas in book one, and the confrontation between Cleon and Diodotus in book three).

But if the frequency of the use of the ‘prudential’ sense in ‘symboleutic’ settings is what Herodotus and Thucydides have in common (this prudential sense is in fact also frequently employed in those parts of the speeches in the orators where a direct appeal is made to win the vote of the Athenian citizens, as we will see in chapter 8), the two authors otherwise differ substantially in their use of *σώφρων* and cognates. Herodotus (section 2) uses these terms sparingly, and mostly in the ‘prudential’ sense described above, but the few relevant passages make a subtle yet telling contribution to the characterisation of the personages involved. Five times, the terms are used in scenes that are dominated by an ‘oriental despot’, and in most of these, there is an implicit contrast between the monarchs, who typically lack *σωφροσύνη*, and their counsellors, who possess the quality. Thus, the terms are used in connection with the ‘madness’ of Cambyzes, to characterise Darius as a strong, autocratic figure, and to

highlight the deliberation and lack of resolve of Xerxes. Early on in the work, there is also a hint of a more general Persian ‘arrogance’, when the Persian sources are said to make the morally dubious claim that the Greeks were fools to start the Trojan expedition for the sake of a faithless woman. Thus, the use of *σώφρων* and cognates in Herodotus makes a subtle but substantial contribution to the characterisation of oriental tyrants as temperamentally disinclined to *σωφροσύνη* (thus addressing the problem of the ‘tyrannical’ temperament that is very important in Platonic dialogues like *Gorgias* and *Republic*). Some of these passages also seem to hint that *σωφροσύνη* is a Greek rather than a Persian virtue. But overt propaganda is not on Herodotus’ agenda here, and such a claim is never made explicitly. The case is, rather, that the counsellor figures include a Greek (Demaratus) and a Persian who nevertheless shows a typically Greek aversion to monarchy and preference for democracy (Otanes).

Thucydides (section 3) is less interested in individuals and more in *πόλεις* as collective bodies. In his speeches, he gives impressive demonstrations of how speakers in council use value terms to influence the votes of their audience. In the deliberations of the city councils, *σώφρων* and cognates are used with reference to external and internal politics (section 3.1). In external politics, the terms are used by speakers to commend the ‘prudence’ of a cautious policy, generally speaking either a ‘non-interventionist’ policy or the formation of a defensive alliance; occasionally, speakers also use the words in a different sense, to remind the councils of their responsibility with regard to other cities. A telling juxtaposition of the use of *σωφροσύνη* in these two types of argumentation (‘caution’ vs. ‘responsibility’) occurs in the great debate at Sparta between Archidamus and Sthenelaïdas (for which, see section 3.2). In internal politics, the terms are used to influence the way in which decisions are taken. Likewise, there are two main senses here, commending either a rather authoritarian type of obedience to the laws and to earlier decisions (*εὐνομία*), or, on the contrary, ‘prudent’ deliberation and the ability to think twice and revise an earlier opinion, if necessary. The two senses are juxtaposed sharply in the confrontation in the Athenian *βουλή* between Cleon and Diodotus in book three.

If many of these senses occur in isolation at many places in the *Histories*, they all come together in Archidamus' eulogy on the *σωφροσύνη* of Sparta. Here, and indeed at many places in the *Histories*, there is the suggestion that *σωφροσύνη* was the typical virtue of Sparta, or at least that the Spartans were very susceptible to the persuasive use of the terms (section 3.2). In fact, the speeches of Archidamus and Sthenelaïdas *both* centre on an appeal to *σωφροσύνη*, yet the policies that they commend are fundamentally opposed.

And if *σωφροσύνη* is strongly associated with Sparta, it is no surprise to see that it is also important to Athenians with pro-Spartan sympathies. Thus, we see that *σωφροσύνη* is the favourite slogan of those in favour of oligarchic reforms on the Spartan model at Athens, particularly so in the times of the government of the Four Hundred (section 3.3). Here the terms are used almost as a slogan, and even if there is at least one passage that seems to suggest that Thucydides himself may not be out of sympathy with the Spartan type of 'prudence' (his complimentary comparison between Chios and Sparta), what is most striking is his evident awareness of how value terms tend to be abused and become hollow when employed by the wrong speakers.

Thus, throughout the *Histories*, we can observe how speakers use value terms with different goals; accordingly, they will not agree whether a given line of action comes in for approbation at all. For some, non-intervention will be a prudent observance of self-interest, for others, it will be a despicable failure to support their allies. For some, terms of approbation like *σωφροσύνη* apply; for others, they do not apply at all. This tension in the application of value terms reaches a climax in the narrator's typology of *στάσις*, prompted by the civil unrest in Corcyra (3.82, see section 3.4). In *στάσις* as the narrator describes it, extremes of violence are embraced and restraint is rejected; violence, formerly despised, now comes in for evaluation in unequivocally positive terms like *ἀνδρεία* (rather than derogatory ones like *τόλμα*), restraint, on the other hand, is no longer appreciated as *σωφροσύνη* but condemned as 'cowardice'. Thus, the application of evaluative terms changes beyond recognition. Moreover, slogans that allegedly address the theme of the common good are ruthlessly abused in service of a dishonest personal agenda. As such, *στάσις*

amounts to an intensification and perversion of the processes that can be observed, in a less extreme form, in the public debate in the Greek πόλεις throughout the *Histories*.

## 2. *Herodotus*

Herodotus uses *σώφρων* and *σωφρονεῖν* five times in scenes dominated by oriental kings or kings in the making, and in these scenes, it is understood that these monarchs lack the ability to avoid excessive and rash action that *σωφροσύνη* typically involves.<sup>1</sup> *σωφροσύνη* in these settings is, rather, the prerogative of the wise counsellors, who frequently act as a foil to these rash and tyrannical monarchs.<sup>2</sup> One of these counsellors is Otanes in book three, who argues against the immediate execution of the coup against Smerdis, and takes Darius' haste as a sign of the latter's desire to emulate the *ἀρετή* of his father:

ὦ παῖ Ὑστάσπεος, εἰς τε πατρός ἀγαθοῦ καὶ ἐκφαίνειν ἔοικας  
 σέωυτόν ἐόντα τοῦ πατρὸς οὐδέν ἥσσω. Τὴν μέντοι ἐπιχείρησιν  
 ταύτην μὴ οὕτω στυτάχυνε ἀβούλως, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ  
 σωφρονέστερον αὐτὴν λάμβανε· δεῖ γὰρ πλέονας γενομένους  
 οὕτως ἐπιχειρεῖν.  
 (Hdt. 3.71.3)

Son of Hystaspes, you are the son of a good father, and you seem to show that you yourself are no worse than your father. But mind, this coup is not to be hurried in such an ill-considered manner;

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that lack of *σωφροσύνη* is, in Herodotus, a characteristic of monarchs rather than orientals in general. Accordingly, there is little or nothing in Herodotus to suggest that, for him, *σωφροσύνη* is typically Greek quality (as opposed to an oriental one). The term is never used with explicit reference to the Greeks, except for one passage where the adverb *σωφρόνως* is used to characterise the Spartans: the Scythian Anacharsis is reported to have said to his king that 'Ἕλληνας πάντας ἀσχόλους εἶναι ἐς πάσαν σοφίην πλὴν Λακεδαιμονίων, τοῦτοις δὲ εἶναι μούνοισι σωφρόνως δοῦναί τε καὶ δέξασθαι λόγον.' 'The Greeks are frantically occupied with all kinds of *σοφία* but for the Spartans; these are the only ones with whom one can *sôphronôs* (quietly) have a discussion.' (Hdt. 4.77.1.)

<sup>2</sup> The classic accounts of these adviser figures are Bischoff (1962 repr.) and Latimore (1939). Of the figures mentioned in the present section, Artabanus and Demaratus roughly belong to the type of the 'tragic warner', and Otanes (omitted by Latimore) is perhaps more of a practical adviser.

no, you must undertake it in a *ῥωφρονεστερον* way. We must see that there will be more of us, and attack only then.

Otanes' is a plea for prudence: careful preparations are better than ill-considered action. But apart from the fact that Otanes' suggestion to acquire more accomplices has a vulnerable spot of its own (the risk of betrayal), it is clear that such 'caution' is unlikely to appeal to a typical 'son of an *ἀγαθός* father', with a characteristic penchant for heroism, the 'noble' trait that Otanes recognises in Darius.<sup>3</sup> Thus it is no surprise to see that Darius is displeased with Otanes' advice, and Darius' plea for action easily wins the day.

In a similar fashion, Darius' argumentation in favour of monarchy immediately after the coup prevails over Otanes' rather striking proposal of *ἰκονομία*, and that of Megabyxos in favour of *ὀλιγαρχία*. It is clear by now that Darius himself is the most appropriate candidate for the post of monarch. By contrast, Otanes is portrayed as an advocate of *ῥωφροσύνη* and even a champion of *ἰκονομία* to mirror the courage and the autocratic inclinations of Darius.<sup>4</sup> Given that *ἰκονομία* is hardly the Persian way, we seem to be invited to think of Otanes as a character with an almost Greek way of thinking; in retrospect, there might be a subliminal suggestion that his *ῥωφροσύνη* is not a very Persian quality either; at any rate, it is not a characteristic of the typical Persian monarch.

Book seven contains an even more salient example of the contrast between a Persian king who lacks *ῥωφροσύνη* and a counselor who has this quality. This is the confrontation between

<sup>3</sup> This is, of course, a polite and adroit way of uttering criticism: by starting with a general acknowledgement that Darius is *ἀγαθός*, Otanes suggests that his criticism is incidental rather than permanent, and moreover that it is a relatively less grave issue on which they now dissent. A famous example of this strategy is the notorious Homeric phrase *Il.* 1.131-2 *μηδ' οὕτως ἀγαθός περ ἐὼν θεοείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ | κλέπτε νόωι*, 'You should not, *ἀγαθός* as you are, god-like Achilles, deceive me as you are now trying to do', on which see Bakker (1988) 133-7, and cf. ch. 2.3. p. 58 n.31.

Otanes' speech has something of the delicate 'court-atmosphere' that Pelling (1991) 130f. notes in connection with Artabanus and Xerxes.

<sup>4</sup> There is no suggestion in Herodotus that Darius, though very different from his son, was in any sense a truly 'better' king, as there is in Aeschylus' *Persians*. Cf. Hartog (1980), ch. 2, and Fisher (1992), 382-5.



Xerxes and Artabanus.<sup>5</sup> Xerxes is less of a resolute autocrat than Darius, but he too essentially lacks good sense: he does not foresee the disastrous outcome of his expedition against Greece. Artabanus warns that the Greeks are not to be underestimated (his description of the dangers of the expedition pretty much foreshadows the eventual outcome), and urges the king at least to think again. Initially, Xerxes answers angrily that Artabanus is a hopeless coward (7.11.1 ἀθύρωι ὄντι καὶ κακῶι) who must be left behind with the women; on a later occasion, however, he apologises to Artabanus that he now agrees with him, but cannot act on this opinion because of an unfavourable dream:

Ἄρτάβανε, ἐγὼ τὸ παραντίκα μὲν οὐκ ἐσωφρόνεον εἶπας ἐς σὲ μάταια ἔπεα χρηστῆς εἵνεκα συμβουλίας· μετὰ μέντοι οὐ πολλὸν χρόνον μετέγνων, ἔγνων δὲ ταῦτά μοι ποιητέα ἔόντα τὰ σὺ ὑπεθήκαο. οὐκ ὦν δυνατός τοί εἰμι ταῦτα βουλόμενος ποιεῖν· τετραμμένωι γὰρ δὴ καὶ μετεγνώκoti ἐπιφοιτῶν ὄνειρον φαντάζεται μοι, οὐδαμῶς συνέπαινον ἔδωκε ποιεῖν με ταῦτα.

(Hdt. 7.15.1-2)

Artabanus, I was not *σώφρων* the other day: I said ill-founded words to you because of your good counsel. You must know that I soon changed my mind, and I recognised that I have to do what you suggested. But mind you, I am unable to do this as I want to: when, as I said, I had reversed and changed my mind, a dream came to visit me, and it did not at all consent that I should follow your advice.

On the surface, the words οὐκ ἐσωφρόνεον suggest a simple excuse: Xerxes admits to an inappropriate response ('your counsel was good, my rejection of it was unfounded') and nothing more.<sup>6</sup> But if this is the surface meaning of οὐκ ἐσωφρόνεον here, the reader will be aware that Xerxes will ultimately reject Artabanus' advice, with disastrous results that prove his ulterior lack

<sup>5</sup> For an extensive treatment of the figure of Artabanus, see Pelling (1991).

<sup>6</sup> There is, on the surface at least, no hint in this passage of a more fundamental flaw in Xerxes' mentality, and the passage differs considerably, pace Van Ophuijsen & Stork (1999) 204-5, from 3.35.2 and 3.64.5, discussed below, where (μὴ) *σωφρονεῖν* is used in relation to the long-term mental derangement of the mad tyrant Cambyzes.

More directly comparable is *Hipp.* 704, where the nurse uses exactly the same apology to Phaedra when her scheme to approach Hippolytus has gone awry (see chapter 6.5 above).

of *ωφροσύνη*. The contrast with the typical prudent adviser Artabanus, who *is* *ωφρων* but, in Xerxes' view, lacks the more assertive 'manly' qualities (7.11.1 *ἀθύρωι ὄντι καὶ κακῶι*) underlines Xerxes' ultimate 'rashness'.

A second *ωφρων* counsellor to Xerxes is the Spartan Demaratus. Here we have a *ωφρων* counsellor who not only *sounds* Greek (as Otanes did) but actually *is* Greek, and as such he seems to be a suitable candidate for the role of *ωφρων* counsellor. Demaratus praises the martial prowess of the Spartans and thereby provokes the king's irritation. He assures the king, however, that these are not the words of a pro-Spartan partisan; they rather acknowledge an unpalatable truth:

καίτοι ὥς ἐγὼ τυγχάνω τὰ νῦν τάδε ἔστοργῶς ἐκείνους, αὐτὸς μάλιστα ἐξεπίστεαι, οἱ με τιμὴν τε καὶ γέρεα ἀπελόμενοι πατρώια ἄπολιν τε καὶ φυγάδα πεποιήκασι, πατὴρ δὲ cὸς ὑποδεξάμενος βίον τέ μοι καὶ οἶκον ἔδωκε. Οὐκ ὦν οἶκός ἐστι ἄνδρα τὸν *ωφρονα* εὖνοίην φαινομένην διωθέεσθαι, ἀλλὰ στέργειν μάλιστα.  
(Hdt. 7.104.2)

(I knew I would provoke your displeasure, but when asked I simply told the truth about the Spartans.) Mind you, you know all too well yourself how much I am in my present situation devoted to them: they took away my honour and my family possessions, and made me a landless fugitive; it was your father who took me in and gave me a living and a place to live. Well, it is hardly likely that a *ωφρων* man will push aside the favours granted him; on the contrary, he will cherish them.

On the surface, Demaratus reassures Xerxes of his loyalty to the Persians rather than the Spartans, and suggests that he would not be *ωφρων* if he still adhered to those who banished him: a clear case of prudence in one's own interest. But again, the public will be aware that Demaratus' admonitions show that he is indeed *ωφρων* in a more far-reaching sense, whereas Xerxes, who does not act on the Spartan's advice, is not.

The remaining two instances relate to a tyrant who is downright mad.<sup>7</sup> *ωφρονεῖν* is here used to describe a normal, sound state of

<sup>7</sup> The 'mad tyrant' is itself something of a prototypical figure in Herodotus, see Hartog (1980) 330ff, and cf. Fisher (1992) 360-5.

mind as opposed to the long-term mental derangement of Cambyses, who went mad after killing the sacred bull of Apis (3.30 Καμβύσης δὲ ὥς λέγουσι Αἰγύπτιοι αὐτίκα διὰ τοῦτο τὸ ἀδίκημα ἐμάνη, ἐὼν οὐδὲ πρότερον φρενῆρης. ‘Cambyses is said by the Egyptians to have fallen mad immediately after because of this crime. Before, he was not very stable-minded either’). Cambyses does not recover until he receives the predicted mortal wound he has desperately tried to escape:

καὶ δὴ ὥς τότε ἐπειρόμενος ἐπύθετο τῆς πόλιος τὸ οὔνομα, ὑπὸ τῆς κυμφορῆς τῆς τε ἐκ τοῦ μάγου ἐκπεπληγμένος καὶ τοῦ τρώματος ἐσωφρόνησε, συλλαβὼν δὲ τὸ θεοπρόπιον εἶπε· "ἐνθαῦτα Καμβύσῃ τὸν Κύρου ἐστὶ πεπωμένον τελευτᾶν."  
(Hdt. 3.64.5)

And, as you can imagine, when he then inquired and heard the name of the town, he was knocked over by the misfortune caused by the *magos* and by his wounds, and because of the shock, he became *σωφρων* again. He understood the oracle and said: Here Cambyses, son of Cyrus, is fated to die.

Now Herodotus has made it very clear that Cambyses’ madness caused him to commit a great number of crimes (treated at length in 3.27-38), but the term *σωφρονεῖν* focuses here on his newly-gained state of mental health, without explicitly addressing the moral consequences of this ‘madness’.

This is even more clear from 3.35.2, where Persian rumours about his madness and alcoholic proclivities have come through to the king, who immediately knows a means to put these rumours to the test:

τούτων δὴ ὧν ἐπιμνησθέντα ὀργῇ λέγειν πρὸς τὸν Πρηξάσπεα· "κύ νυν μάθε [αὐτὸς] εἰ λέγουσι Πέρσαι ἀληθέα εἴτε αὐτοὶ λέγοντες ταῦτα παραφρονέουσι. εἰ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ παιδὸς τοῦ σοῦ τοῦδε ἐστεῶτος ἐν τοίσι προθύροις βαλὼν τύχοιμι μέσης τῆς καρδίας, Πέρσαι φανέονται λέγοντες οὐδέν· ἦν δὲ ἀμάρτω, φάναι Πέρσας τε λέγειν ἀληθέα καὶ ἐμέ μὴ σωφρονεῖν."  
(Hdt. 3.35.1-2)

After mentioning these things, he said angrily to Prexaspes: Now see for yourself if the Persians are right or if they themselves are out of their mind (*paraphroneousi*, to ‘think off the mark’) to say so. I will aim at this son of yours who stands at the gateway, and if hit him in the middle of his heart, it will appear that they talk

rubbish. But if I miss, then you may say that the Persians are right and that I am not *ωφρων*.

As the contrast with *αὐτοὶ λέγοντες ταῦτα παραφρονέουσι* ('they are utterly wrong to say so') shows, it is only the state of mental derangement which Cambyses here conditionally accepts. The moral issues connected with his madness are, again, not addressed directly, but they are immediately clear from the context: the irony of the situation is that what Cambyses considers proof of his own sobriety and sanity, in fact constitutes a further crime to prove him mad.

Thus, in all these instances, the use of *ωφρων* and *ωφρονεῖν* subtly contributes to the portrayal of the oriental kings as figures who do not care for, and crucially lack, *ωφροσύνη*, with far-reaching consequences.

The perverse application of *ωφροσύνη* by Cambyses, committing an atrocity as 'proof' of his sanity, is foreshadowed early in the *Histories*, when the narrator describes the Persian view on the origins of the conflict between Hellas and Persia. *ωφροσύνη* is invoked here by the Persians to push aside the Greeks' justification of the expedition to Troy. On this view, the abduction of Helen should have provoked a counter-abduction at most, but never the 'disproportional' reaction of a military campaign.

τὸ μὲν νυν ἄρπάζειν γυναῖκας ἀνδρῶν ἀδίκων νομίζειν ἔργον εἶναι, τὸ δὲ ἄρπασθεισῶν σπουδὴν ποιήσασθαι τιμωρέειν ἀνοήτων, τὸ δὲ μηδεμίαν ὥρην ἔχειν ἄρπασθεισῶν ωφρόνων· δῆλα γὰρ δὴ ὅτι, εἰ μὴ αὐταὶ ἐβούλοντο, οὐκ ἂν ἥρπάζοντο. σφέας μὲν δὴ τοὺς ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίης λέγουσι Πέρσαι ἄρπαζομένων τῶν γυναικῶν λόγον οὐδένα ποιήσασθαι, Ἕλληνας δὲ Λακεδαιμονίης εἵνεκεν γυναικὸς στόλον μέγαν συναγεῖραι καὶ ἔπειτα ἐλθόντας ἐς τὴν Ἀσίην τὴν Πριάμου δύναμιν κατελεῖν. ἀπὸ τούτου αἰεὶ ἡγήσασθαι τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν σφίσι εἶναι πολέμιον.

(Hdt. 1.4.2-3)

Now abducting women, they consider, is the behaviour of unjust men, but to make serious work of taking revenge for the abducted is something for the foolish; by contrast, not to care for the abducted is a characteristic of *ωφρονες*. For it is clear that, unless these women were willing themselves, they would not have been abducted. Now according to the Persians, they themselves, the people of Asia, have never made a fuss about the women that were

abducted, but the Greeks gathered an immense army for the sake of a Spartan woman, and then went over to Asia to crush the power of Priam. Ever since, they have regarded all that is Greek as inimical to them.

Of course the justification of the Greek cause is not entirely denied here (the Persian accounts at least grant that abduction is an 'injustice' mutually committed by both Greeks and Persians) but it is pushed aside by the consideration that it makes no sense to make a great fuss about such an injustice.<sup>8</sup> For, the reasoning goes, an abducted woman is not a victim but a willing accomplice. That is why setting up a military expedition for the sake of such a woman makes no sense, and one has only oneself to blame for the hazards and hardships that go with it. Moreover, revenge for the rape of Helen cannot be taken seriously on this count as a motivation for the Trojan war, which now becomes an act of unwarranted aggression that justifies the perennial enmity between the states.

Now there can be no doubt that, from a Greek point of view, the reasoning here is perverse. Rape inflicts *ἀτιμία* on the deprived husband, and it is out of the question that doing nothing about a dishonouring insult is commended as evidence of good sense. The Persian account is thus utterly suspect, for it wilfully puts aside all moral considerations. As such, it gives evidence of Persian 'arrogance'; the Greek public is bound to conclude that it is the Persians rather than the Greeks who lack *σωφροσύνη* and are to blame for the big clash between the two cultures.

To summarise, Herodotus' use of *σώφρων* and cognates is remarkable for the light it sheds on the characterisation of the oriental kings who crucially lack the virtue. Subliminally, there are perhaps a few hints as well that *σωφροσύνη* is a Greek rather than a Persian quality: this is most clear from the last passage quoted (1.4.3); elsewhere, *σωφροσύνη* in oriental settings only belongs to those prudent oriental *συμβουλευταί* who will seem sympathetic

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<sup>8</sup> Heath (1990), 385-400, investigates a number of speeches by Athenians in Thucydides, where considerations of justice are pushed aside, and concludes from external evidence that to a fifth-century readership, it was unacceptable to do. So it seems reasonable to suppose that the 'immorality' of the Persian argument must also be immediately obvious to Herodotus' public.

to a Greek addressee. (One of them, Demaratus, is of course indeed Greek.) We will return to the problem of the ‘hybristic’ temper, and its antithesis to *σωφροσύνη*, in discussing the psychology of Plato.

### 3. *Thucydides*

Herodotus used *σώφρων* and *σωφρονεῖν* to characterise individuals, specifically a number of oriental despots (who typically lack the virtue) and their more sensible advisers (who have this quality). Thucydides, by contrast, focuses on *πόλεις* as collective bodies, and uses the terms almost exclusively in characterisations of the internal or external policy of a *πόλις* as a whole.<sup>9</sup> The collective body of a *πόλις* is, to a considerable degree, presented as an autonomous entity, and as such, the moral obligations ascribed to a *πόλις* resemble those of the individual male citizen within the *πόλις*, but on a grander scale: where the citizen will have to take good care of his household, but in such a way that he will help his *φίλοι*, and will not wrong those who are not his *ἐχθροί*, the *πόλις* as a whole is primarily concerned with the careful management of its own affairs (in this respect, considerations of prudence and self-interest are key factors that determine the behaviour of a *σώφρων πόλις*), but it also has clear obligations towards its allies.

In debates on external politics (section 3.1), *σωφροσύνη* is regularly invoked to commend a cautious policy in preference to one that is perceived as more outgoing and risky: the safety of the *πόλις* itself is ostensibly the most important consideration here. On a rather similar line of argumentation, *σωφροσύνη* may also be used to advocate a more ‘positive’ line of action, notably the formation of an alliance that (allegedly) aims at self-defence rather than military aggression. In debates on the internal politics of a *πόλις*, *σωφροσύνη* is used to comment on the process of deliberation in the city council. Here, it is invoked both by

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<sup>9</sup> An apparent exception is the characterisation of Archidamus as an *ἀνὴρ καὶ ξυνετός δοκῶν εἶναι καὶ σώφρων*, see p. 210 n. 19 below.

speakers who plead for a careful (re)consideration of the issues at hand (εὐβουλία) and by those who wish to cut short such deliberations, and simply demand ‘order’ and ‘obedience’ to earlier decisions (εὐνομία). The debate between Cleon and Diodotus in book three juxtaposes the two types of argument.

All political associations of *σωφροσύνη* come together in the great debate at Sparta between Archidamus and Sthenelaïdas in book one (section 3.2). The ideology of *σωφροσύνη* seems to have been important to Sparta, and Archidamus offers the fullest exposition of the ideology of *σωφροσύνη* when defending the Spartans’ ‘slowness’ to go to war. Archidamus is countered, however, by Sthenelaïdas, who also appeals to *σωφροσύνη* when reminding the Spartans of their obligations to Corinth.

If *σωφροσύνη* is something of a ‘Spartan’ quality, it is also embraced by pro-Spartan Athenians. In Athens, *σωφροσύνη* becomes a slogan of those in favour of restrictions on radical democracy (section 3.3).

Thus, it is a limited number of types of policies — and invariably those wherein a certain kind of ‘restraint’ can be perceived — that come in for appraisal in terms of *σωφροσύνη*; but it is a very different question whether a certain policy calls for praise at all or is to be severely criticised instead. On such matters, there is bound to be considerable disagreement between opposing parties, and Thucydides is sensitive throughout to the adaptability of value terms in the service of persuasive and manipulative strategies. With the exception of the author’s remark on the *σωφροσύνη* of the Chians and Spartans (8.24), all the uses of our terms reflect the point of view of one or more agents in the historical narrative; as such, they are used virtually everywhere in service of clearly discernible persuasive strategies. The extreme case of this, where persuasive use shades into sheer abuse, is of course found in the chapter on the corruption of values after the revolt at Corcyra (3.82, see section 3.4). But the ‘perversion’ of moral standards described there is no more than an intensification of the ‘normal’ situation in the *Histories*: throughout, it is evident that one and the same situation is likely to be evaluated by different parties in entirely different terms.

### 3.1. *σωφροσύνη in External and Internal Politics*

Given that the *Histories* tell the story of Greek πόλεις at war, it is perhaps no surprise that *σωφροσύνη* is most frequently invoked to commend caution in foreign affairs, and our terms occur frequently where it is debated whether such caution is indeed the policy to be adopted. A case in point is the very first instance of *σωφροσύνη* in the *Histories*, where the citizens of Corcyra, who previously were reluctant to accept any state as their allies, now seek the help of the Athenians against Corinth. They suggest that their isolationism, originally motivated by the desire to prevent involvement in the conflicts of others, and as such a fairly typical case of ‘prudential’ caution and thus of *σωφροσύνη*,<sup>10</sup> turns out to be an ill-considered and weakening policy now that they stand alone in their conflict with the Corinthians:

καὶ περιέστηκεν ἡ δοκοῦσα ἡμῶν πρότερον σωφροσύνη, τὸ μὴ ἐν ἀλλοτρίαις ξυμμαχίαις τῇ τοῦ πέλας γνώμῃ ξυγκινδυνεύειν, νῦν ἀβουλία καὶ ἀσθένεια φαινομένη.  
(Th. 1.32.4)

And it has turned out that what once seemed to be our *σωφροσύνη*, not to involve ourselves in alliances with other states lest we should also involve ourselves in risks of our neighbour’s making, appears in fact to be lack of deliberation and weakness.

According to the citizens of Corcyra, their isolationism now disqualifies as *σωφροσύνη* because of its effects: their isolationism turns out to be weakness and a threat to their city. For their Corinthian opponents, this policy of the citizens of Corcyra does not qualify for the label of *σωφροσύνη* at all, but on account of its *intentions* rather than its *effects*. According to the Corinthians, the citizens of Corcyra refused to form any alliance not for the sake of their safety and out of ‘prudence’ (1.37.2 διὰ τὸ εὐφρον), but because they wanted a free hand to commit injustice (ἐπὶ

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<sup>10</sup> Hornblower (1991) ad loc., cites Dover (1974) 119 who states that the criterion for *σωφροσύνη* is ‘the overcoming of the impulse to immediate or short-term pleasure or gain’. In most contexts, it is the avoidance of long-term risks rather than resistance to short-term pleasure that is really relevant to the prudential use of *σωφροσύνη*, as is the case here. A ‘persuasive’ connection between the two is made by Archidamus in 1.84.2 (see section 3.2 below).



κακουργΐαι) against their neighbours; Corcyra's isolationism meant a licence to harm others. It is up to the Athenians, the Corinthians suggest, to show *genuine* prudence for the sake of the safety of their city: if they do so (1.40.2 εἰ σωφρονοῦσι), they will not accept now an ally who is bound to involve them in a conflict with the mightier city of Corinth, but they will rather consider it prudent (1.42.2 σωφρον) to alleviate the already existing tensions between Athens and Corinth.

In these cases, then, σωφροσύνη in external affairs clearly aims at the self-interest of its citizens: it promotes the safety of the πόλις and deters intervention abroad that may involve cities in great risks. These considerations are the main points in most contexts where speakers plead for σωφροσύνη in external affairs.<sup>11</sup> If this type of σωφροσύνη is typically concerned with the avoidance of a dangerous policy, it can occasionally also encourage more positive action, notably the formation of a defensive alliance against a large external threat. In this sense, σωφροσύνη

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<sup>11</sup> Thus, a Spartan embassy invokes σωφροσύνη to remind the Athenians of the instability of fortune, in order to make them accept negotiations over the captives at Pylos rather than continuing the hostilities (4.18.4); more cynically, the Athenians suggest to the Melians that open resistance to Athens is not σωφρον and that abstention from open hostilities is, for the Melians, a means to limit the damage (5.101.1, 5.111.3).

In the Sicilian context, the Syracusans suggest to the citizens of Camarina that is unrealistic to hope both that Syracuse will be defeated in order that it may become less prone to external aggression (6.78.2 ἵνα σωφρονοθῶμεν), and at the same time that the city may yet be spared in order to defend others against Athens.

To discourage the Camarineans from an alliance with Athens, the Syracusan messengers invoke the example of Rhegion, a city which refused to help the Leontinians against Syracuse, in spite of their common Euboian origin; this, the ambassadors suggest, is the paradoxical phenomenon of 'prudence-against-the-odds' (6.79.4 ἀλόγως σωφρονοῦσιν), the innuendo being that the Camarineans have all the more reason to refrain from anti-Syracusan activities. In reply to this, the Athenians suggest that Athens is not in need of criticism by the Camarineans of Athens' interventionist foreign policy: Athens does not need them as σωφρονισταί, as critics encouraging restraint (6.87.3); for, the Athenians claim, it is the mere prospect of Athenian intervention that deters other cities from aggression and forces them to be prudent, while non-interventionist cities gain their safety from Athens (6.87.5, ἀμφοτέροι ἀναγκάζονται ὁ μὲν ἄκων σωφρονεῖν, ὁ δ' ἀπραγμόνως κωλύεσθαι, 'both are forced, the one to be prudent against his will, the other to use his policy of non-intervention as a means to safety').

is repeatedly invoked by those who advocate the formation of a Sicilian alliance against Athens (4.60.1, 4.61.1, 4.64.4).<sup>12</sup>

A more overtly moral appeal is made after the capitulation of Plataea by the spokesmen of that city to their Spartan judges.<sup>13</sup> The Plataeans plead that their alliance with Athens was only made after a Spartan refusal to help them against Thebes (3.55.1); as such, this alliance was not a deed of aggression against Sparta, and certainly not severe enough to outweigh the Plataean merits in the Persian wars: the Plataeans claim that they are not enemies to the Spartans, but friends who had no other choice but to fight (3.58.2, οὐκ ἐχθρούς... ἀλλ' εὖνους κατ' ἀνάγκην πολεμήσαντες, 'we are not enemies but sympathisers who were forced to wage war'). And since there is no enmity between the two cities, they argue, it would be an unwarranted deed of aggression for the Spartans to kill them. The Spartans should not do this to gratify their Theban allies; they should do the Thebans a favour that is *σώφρων* rather than shameful (3.58.1 *σώφρονά τε ἀντὶ αἰσχρᾶς κομίσασθαι χάριν*), for killing the Plataeans would constitute a sin against the conventions of war to kill those who deliver themselves freely (3.58.3), and besides, the Spartans would be responsible for the fact that the graves of their ancestors who fought Plataea would be left untended (3.58.4). The Spartans should deal with Plataea in a spirit of 'sensible compassion' (3.59.1 *οἴκτωι σώφροني*) rather than unwarranted aggression.

Here, then, the appeal is to the unwritten moral code of international politics, that prohibits violence against a state that is not openly hostile. The Plataean evidence of their 'friendship' to the Spartans is evidently tenuous (the Persian wars of decades ago seem to be the strongest case in point), and it is clear that the Plataeans argue in these moral terms (even invoking the Spartans' sense of duty towards their ancestors) mainly because they cannot very well argue that it is in any sense in the present interest of Sparta to show lenience: their plea is expectedly un-

<sup>13</sup> For the speech of the inhabitants of Plataea, see Macleod (1977) 227-46 [= id. (1983) 103-139]. Hogan (1972) draws attention to the importance in this speech of the appeal to *οἶκος*, with interesting parallels from E. *Hec.*

successful and the narrator leaves no doubt that the Spartan cruelty against Plataea was motivated by the consideration that the Thebans were useful allies in the war against Athens (3.68.4).

Turning now to the field of the internal affairs of a πόλις, we find that *σωφροσύνη* is invoked in the context of two types of arguments. Occasionally, the term is employed by speakers who claim that careful deliberation is the key to the management of the city's affairs. This is another use of *σωφροσύνη* in a prudential sense, this time with reference to internal politics, and closely associated with the concept of *εὐβουλία*. Alternatively, the term is employed by speakers who are less in favour of an open discussion, and simply urge obedience of the city's νόμοι. (In section 3.2 below, we will see how Archidamus connects the two, and presents obedience to the laws as the safeguard of Spartan *εὐβουλία*.)

The clash between these two uses of *σωφροσύνη* is illustrated by the second Athenian debate on the punishment of Mytilene. Here, it is Cleon who, in his argumentation against a revision of the council's decision, uses the argument that, if Athens seriously aspires to dominate an empire, the city's νόμοι are to be respected at all costs:

πάντων δὲ δεινότατον εἰ βέβαιον ἡμῖν μηδὲν καθεστήξει ὧν ἂν δόξῃ περὶ, μηδὲ γνωσόμεθα ὅτι χεῖροσι νόμοις ἀκινήτοις χρωμένη πόλις κρείσσων ἐστὶν ἢ καλῶς ἔχουσιν ἀκύροις, ἀμαθία τε μετὰ σωφροσύνης ὠφελιμώτερον ἢ δεξιότης μετὰ ἀκολασίας, οἳ τε φαυλότεροι τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τοὺς ξυνετωτέρους ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεον ἄμεινον οἰκοῦσι τὰς πόλεις.

(Th. 3.37.3)

But it is most extremely disturbing if nothing that we decide on will stand firm, and if we do not realise that a city that maintains *nomoi* that are less good but unchallenged is stronger than one that has good *nomoi* that lack authority; we must be aware that a lack of sophistication that goes with *σωφροσύνη* is rather more useful than dexterity without discipline; simple people generally achieve, in comparison to more intelligent ones, a better administration of their cities.

Cleon wishes to prevent reconsideration of the expedition against Mytilene, and in order to prevent this, he suggests that it

is *ωφροσύνη* simply to obey the *νόμοι*.<sup>14</sup> The argument against the dangers of excessive sophistication (used by Archidamus in the conservative setting of Sparta, see section 3.2), is employed in the democratic setting by the demagogue Cleon to silence his elitist opponents. In the course of this argument, Cleon manages to turn ‘ignorance’ (*ἄμαθία*) into an asset, and the ‘agility’ (*δεξιότης*) of the elite into a liability, for it may, he suggests, hide corruption (*ἀκολασία*); for Cleon, *ωφροσύνη* is firmly on the side of the ‘law-abiding’ masses rather than on that of the ‘subversive’ elite.<sup>15</sup>

Cleon’s opponent, Diodotus, argues in favour of a renewed debate on Mytilene and deliberately ignores the strategy of intimidation (‘don’t you dare think again’) employed by Cleon. He places full emphasis on the self-interest of the Athenian council, and stresses the importance of *εὐβουλία*. This *εὐβουλία*, Diodotus suggests, is incompatible with the rashness and excitability (3.42.1 *τάχος τε καὶ ὀργήν*) now displayed and advocated by Cleon. What is worse, when Cleon accuses his opponents of corruption, he threatens to rob the city of good advisors. For useful counsellors of a *πόλις* should be able to speak freely without fear for their reputation:

χρή ... τὴν δὲ *κώφρωνα πόλιν* τῷ τε πλείστα *εὖ βουλευόντι* μὴ προστίθεναι τιμὴν, ἀλλὰ μηδ’ ἐλασσὸν τῆς ὑπαρχούσης, καὶ τὸν μὴ τυχόντα γνώμης οὐχ ὅπως ζημιῶν ἀλλὰ μηδ’ ἀτιμάζειν.  
(Th, 3.42.3)

A *κώφρων polis* will neither add to, nor detract from, the *timê* of a man who is mostly successful in offering advice; and a speaker who does not meet with approval will not only not be punished by the city, neither will he suffer disgrace.

This care for integrity is, in Diodotus’ view, all the more pressing because the council is likely to hold their speakers responsible

<sup>14</sup> There seems to have been no juridical distinction in the fifth century between a *νόμος* and a *ψήφισμα*, see Hornblower (1987) 423f. and (1991) 423, Hansen (1978), even if a conceptual distinction was occasionally made, cf. Macleod (1978), 69 [= (1983), 93].

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion of the paradoxes in Cleon’s argumentation, see Leppin (1999) 93-4. For the ambiguity of *δεξιότης*, usually suspect to the speakers in Thucydides, see Meyer (1939) 70-1.

for the outcome of the policy on which it decides; if they were to hold themselves responsible, they would be more inclined to decide in a well-considered manner (3.43.5 *ωφρονέστερον ἂν ἐκρίνετε*). Therefore, Diodotus concludes, the Athenians would be well-advised (3.44.1 *εἰ ωφρονοῦμεν*) to regard the present debate as one concerning the *εὐβουλία* of the *πόλις* rather than the injustice of Mytilene.

Against Cleon's suggestion that the *ώφρων πόλις* should rigidly stick to its own decisions, Diodotus places full emphasis on the *ωφροσύνη* of attending to good advice. Like Cleon, he seems aware of a strong contrast between the city's masses and the politicians who advise them, but in his representation of these matters, it is the elitist leaders rather than the masses who are especially vulnerable, in view of the fact that their reputation is easily damaged. Therefore, if the Athenian council is *ώφρων* and acts out of well-advised awareness of its own interest, it will not accept Cleon's incrimination of the city's political elite.<sup>16</sup>

Thus, we see that for a city state, *ωφροσύνη* consists in a limited number of typical policies. In external politics, *ωφροσύνη* commends caution for the sake of one's own safety, typically a non-interventionist policy or the formation of defensive alliance; occasionally, *ωφροσύνη* also serves as a reminder of one's moral obligations versus other states. In internal politics, *ωφροσύνη* is used to influence the process of deliberation, and either urges 'obedience' to the city's *νόμοι* as they are, or 'careful deliberation' before making a decision.

### 3.2. *ωφροσύνη in Sparta*

All the notions connected with *ωφροσύνη* in politics that we have noted above, are addressed in the great debate at Sparta on the issue of war against Athens between Archidamus and Sthenelaidas. This episode does not only show how different parties

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<sup>16</sup> On the figure of Diodotus, otherwise unknown, see the remarks of Hornblower (1991) ad 3.41. Ostwald (1979) construes a fuller career for him, but, as Hornblower remarks, 'It is artistically satisfying to have the famous and raucous Cleon defeated on his own terms by an utterly obscure figure who then retires into the shades.'

tend to evaluate one and the same policy in entirely different terms, and how both Spartan speakers invoke *σωφροσύνη* in defence of an entirely different policy; it also offers a very full statement of the ideology of a *σώφρων πόλις* as advocated by the Spartan king Archidamus, in which he manages to combine virtually all ideas connected with political *σωφροσύνη*, and present this amalgam as a typically Spartan asset.

The main point of the debate is the Spartans' reluctance to intervene against Athens on behalf of their allies. The Corinthians, who of course intend to spur their allies, grant the Spartans *σωφροσύνη* on the rather irrelevant point of internal politics (1.68.1 *καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ* [sc. *τὸ πιστὸν ... τῆς καθ' ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς πολιτείας*] *σωφροσύνην μὲν ἔχετε*, 'in view of the stability of your own state, you possess *σωφροσύνη*'), but then go on immediately to suggest that this introverted position also leads to lack of understanding (*ἄμαθία*, 1.68.1) of external affairs, especially the danger Athens constitutes. This 'lack of perception' (cf. 1.69.3 *τὸ ἀναισθητὸν ὑμῶν*) leads to 'sluggishness' and 'conservatism',<sup>17</sup> and to the failure of the Spartans to intervene on behalf of their wronged allies (1.68.3, 1.71.4-7). And the Corinthians stress that these characteristics are extraordinarily dangerous because the Athenians possess all the opposite, out-going and aggressive qualities.

Later on, before the Peloponnesian council, the Corinthians take a similar position. Having won over the Spartans to their side, they now try to consolidate the rest of the alliance, and state that

*ἀνδρῶν γὰρ σωφρόνων μὲν ἐστίν, εἰ μὴ ἀδικοῦντο, ἡσυχάζειν, ἀγαθῶν δὲ ἀδικουμένους ἐκ μὲν εἰρήνης πολεμεῖν, εὖ δὲ παρασχόν ἐκ πολέμου*

<sup>17</sup> 1.69.4 *ἡσυχάζετε ... οὐ τῇ δυνάμει τινά, ἀλλὰ τῇ μελλήσει ἀμυνόμενοι*, 'you remain inactive, defending yourselves against others not by means of your power, but by your slowness to actually use it'; 1.70.2, *ὑμεῖς δὲ τὰ ὑπάρχοντα κώϊζειν καὶ ἐπιγινῶναι μηδὲν καὶ ἔργῳ οὐδὲ τὰναγκαῖα ἐξικέσθαι*, 'you are prone to keep what you have got, to think of nothing new, and in action never even to go as far as necessary'; 1.70.4 *καὶ μὴν καὶ ἄοκνοι πρὸς ὑμᾶς μελλήτας*, 'and mind you, they have no doubts, whereas you always linger'; 1.71.1 *διαμέλλετε*, 'you continue to delay'; 1.71.3 *ἀρχαιοτροπὰ ὑμῶν τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα*, 'your actions are outdated'; 1.71.4 *βραδύτης*, 'slowness'.

πάλιν ξυμβήναι, καὶ μήτε τῇ κατὰ πόλεμον εὐτυχίαι ἐπαίρεσθαι  
μήτε τῷ ἡσυχίᾳ τῆς εἰρήνης ἡδόμενον ἀδικεῖσθαι.  
(Th. 1.120.4)

It belongs to men who are *cōphrones* to keep quiet if they suffer no injustice, but to *agathoi* to put and end to peace and go to war if they are wronged, and then, when a suitable opportunity arises, to stop the war and come to an agreement. They are neither carried away by their successes in warfare, nor do they allow themselves to suffer injustice because they delight in the tranquillity of peace.

This is essentially the same argumentation: a peaceful foreign policy is fine when one does not suffer injustice; in such circumstances, it is the typical behaviour of *cōphrones* to keep quiet; but when one suffers injustice, restraint is not in demand (and *cōphrocūny* does no longer apply): in such circumstances, it takes *ἀρετή* to go to war. In order to make the war more palatable to their allies, the Corinthians now downplay its time scale and intensity (to the Spartans, they had stressed the threat from Athens in order to spur them on); otherwise, however, they make it equally clear that it is now no real option to do nothing and dress that up as *cōphrocūny*.<sup>18</sup>

When the Spartans come to debate the Corinthian demands for action against Athens, their own views are divided. Caution is urged by king Archidamus, of whom the narrator states that he had a reputation for being both ‘intelligent’ and *cōphron* (1.79.2 *ἀνὴρ καὶ ξυνετὸς δοκῶν εἶναι καὶ cōphron*)<sup>19</sup> and who is thus estab-

<sup>18</sup> As we have seen, the appeal to *cōphrocūny* (‘prudence’) is often a perfectly acceptable strategy for those who *do* wish to prevent military actions. Speakers seem to have opposing types of arguments at their disposal, according to the position they wish to defend. See Roisman (2003) 132-6, for different types of appeals to *andreia* in arguments for peace and war.

<sup>19</sup> Therewith, Archidamus is the only individual to whom the term *cōphron* is applied in Thucydides, cf. Badian (1990) 173n.39. In view of the contents of his speech, it is clear that the point of this remark lies in Archidamus’ view on Sparta’s internal and foreign politics; in this respect, we have the same ‘political’ usage here.

Incidentally, it is to be noted that remark on Archidamus, *ἀνὴρ καὶ ξυνετὸς δοκῶν εἶναι καὶ cōphron* (1.79.2), does not represent the point of view of the narrator, but that of the Spartans. It is not implied that the narrator considers Archidamus to be an exceptionally good leader: for all his renown for *cōphrocūny* and intelligence, his leadership is not presented in the *Histories* as

lished as someone who is unlikely, in view of his intelligence, to be completely insensitive to the Corinthian demands, yet equally unlikely, in view of his very Spartan *σωφροσύνη*, to react strongly to them. Archidamus indeed pleads for a combination of negotiations and preparations for war. He then counters the Corinthian attack on Spartan slowness, without denying any of the actual charges, but by suggesting that they are to be viewed in entirely different terms:

καὶ τὸ βραδὺ καὶ μέλλον, ὃ μέμφονται μάλιστα ἡμῶν, μὴ αἰσχύνεσθε. σπεύδοντές τε γὰρ χολαίτερον ἂν παύσαισθε διὰ τὸ ἀπαράσκευοι ἐγχειρεῖν, καὶ ἅμα ἐλευθέραν καὶ εὐδοξοτάτην πόλιν διὰ παντὸς νεμόμεθα. (2) καὶ δύναται μάλιστα σωφροσύνη ἔμφρων τοῦτ' εἶναι· μόνου γὰρ δι' αὐτὸ εὐπραγίαις τε οὐκ ἐξυβρίζομεν καὶ ξυμφοραῖς ἥσσον ἐτέρων εἴκομεν· τῶν τε ξὺν ἐπαίνῳ ἐξοτρυνόντων ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ παρὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν οὐκ ἐπαιρόμεθα ἡδονῇ, καὶ ἥν τις ἄρα ξὺν κατηγορίαι παροξύνῃ, οὐδὲν δὴ μᾶλλον ἀχθεσθέντες ἀνεπαίσθημεν. (3) πολεμικοὶ τε καὶ εὐβουλοὶ διὰ τὸ εὐκοσμον γιγνόμεθα, τὸ μὲν ὅτι αἰδῶς σωφροσύνης πλείστον μετέχει, αἰσχύνῃς δὲ εὐψυχία, εὐβουλοὶ δὲ ἀμαθέστερον τῶν νόμων τῆς ὑπεροψίας παιδευόμενοι καὶ ξὺν χαλεπότητι σωφρονέστερον ἢ ὥστε αὐτῶν ἀνηκουστεῖν, καὶ μὴ τὰ ἀχρεΐα ξυνετοὶ ἄγαν ὄντες τὰς τῶν πολεμίων παρασκευὰς λόγῳ καλῶς μεμφόμενοι ἀνομοίως ἔργῳ ἐπεξιέναι, νομίζειν δὲ τὰς τε διανοίας τῶν πέλας παραπλησίους εἶναι καὶ τὰς προσπιπτούσας τύχας οὐ λόγῳ διαιρετάς.  
(Th. 1.84.1-3)

And as to our being slow and hesitant, that which they criticise most in us, do not be ashamed at that. For if you hurry, you may well take more time to finish because of ill preparations. At the same time, it is also true that we have always lived in a free and respected city. This quality may in fact well be sensible *σωφροσύνη*: for we are the only ones who do not become arrogant when we have success, and are less than others inclined to give in when we suffer misfortune. If people praise us in order to incite us to take risks against our own good judgement, we are not carried away by pleasure; and if someone uses ugly words in order to spur us on, we are — of course — not any more inclined to give in out of annoyance.

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especially far-sighted or successful. See Westlake (1968) 122-35, and Pelling (1991). A more positive estimation of Archidamus is given by Bloedow (1983) 27-49.



We are both warlike and well-advised on account of our orderliness. We are warlike because αἰδώς is rooted in *σωφροσύνη*, and courage in a sense of shame; we are well-advised because by education we are not sufficiently sophisticated to know better than our laws, and the severity of our upbringing leads to too much *σωφροσύνη* to disobey them. We are not unduly clever in useless matters, so that we might verbally criticise the preparations of our adversaries well, but fail to stand up against them when it comes to action. No, we take it that the intentions of other people are rather like our own, and that the quirks of chance are impossible to determine by calculation.

Archidamus starts by countering the Corinthians' accusation of sluggishness. He suggests that the Spartans have every reason to be proud of their city, and claims that the Spartan slowness in going to war is not unacceptable sluggishness, but far rather well-considered prudence (1.79.2 *σωφροσύνη ἔμφρων*). The very same caution in external affairs that was criticised by the Corinthians is now praised in the most emphatic terms. But Archidamus goes on to corroborate his view on the good sides of Spartan restraint by stressing other aspects of the Spartan *πολιτεία* that can be viewed in terms of *σωφροσύνη*; in the process, he gives as complete an ideology of political *σωφροσύνη* as one is likely to get.

According to Archidamus (§ 4), the *σωφροσύνη* of the Spartans also entails constancy in fortune and misfortune: the Spartans do not abuse their power when successful (1.84.2, οὐκ ἐξυβρίζομεν), and they are constant when suffering misfortune (ξυμφοραῖς ἥσσον ... εἵκομεν). According to Archidamus, this constancy means that the Spartans do not allow themselves to be unduly influenced by the pleasure of flattery and the pain of critique (1.84.2 τῶν τε ξὺν ἐπαίνῳ ἐξοτρυνόντων ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ παρὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν οὐκ ἐπαιρόμεθα ἡδονῇ, καὶ ἥν τις ἄρα ξὺν κατηγορίαι παροξύνῃ, οὐδὲν δὲ μᾶλλον ἀχθεσθέντες ἀνεπείσθημεν). The prudence that had already been claimed to be the essence of the Spartan reluctance to help their allies (note ἐπὶ τὰ δεινὰ and παρὰ τὸ δοκοῦν ἡμῖν, which suggest that there are sound reasons for remaining inactive) is now combined with resistance to ἡδονή and ἄχθος, introducing the notion of *σωφροσύνη* as self-control. Of course, the claim sounds like special pleading given the fact that Archidamus' speech has the very aim of preventing the Spartans from overreacting to the Corinthian criticisms.

In the next section (1.84.3), Archidamus counters the accusation that Sparta fails to stand up for her allies, and the suggestion that the city is not up to a confrontation with the aggressive and outgoing Athenians. Archidamus now invokes Spartan *σωφροσύνη* as a source of courage (*εὐψυχία*) and careful deliberation (*εὐβουλία*). The virtue is now linked, strikingly, to a 'war-like' attitude (*πολεμικοὶ ... γιγνόμεθα*): *σωφροσύνη* in the sense of 'self-control' or orderliness (*τὸ εὐκοσμον*, a notion already well established in 1.84.2) is now regarded as a source of *αἰδώς*,<sup>20</sup> which in turn is considered a source of courage and martial prowess.<sup>21</sup> The connection between *σωφροσύνη* and martial courage, always difficult to establish and as such a recurrent concern for thinkers concerned with ethics,<sup>22</sup> is of course apposite to a context where Sparta has been charged with sluggishness: in 1.83.1, Archidamus is responding to Corinthian critique here, and presses a point that he has already made: that it is not *ἀνανδρία* not to attack immediately (1.83.1).

And to corroborate the view that the Spartans are well able to respond to challenges in an adequate manner, Archidamus stresses that they are well-advised (*εὐβουλοὶ*) because they are not clever enough to know better than their laws and too *σώφρονες* to disobey them. This respect for their own laws (a point granted even by the Corinthians) is now said to lead to *εὐβουλία* (1.84.3) in external affairs, in as much as the Spartans are not so clever that they look down on their enemies, and hence do not run the risk of underestimating them.

Thus, Archidamus combines some well-established conceptual fields associated with *σωφροσύνη*, 'prudence' both in internal and external affairs, 'constancy' in success and ill-fortune and 'resistance' to pleasure and pain, and 'respect' for the laws; besides, he establishes one rather more tenuous link, that of

<sup>20</sup> On the difficulties concerning the use of *μετέχει* in this passage, see Hornblower (1991) ad loc, and cf. Nussbaum (1986) 508n.24. As Nussbaum states, Thucydides is tracing *εὐψυχία* back via *αἰδώς* to *σωφροσύνη*, not the other way round.

<sup>21</sup> For the connection between *αἰδώς* and shame in battle, see Cairns (1993) 68-87 (Homer), 265-8 (Euripides), 420-2 (Aristotle's ethics).

<sup>22</sup> Hussey (1985) 123-4 specifically links the present passage to the thought of Democritus.

ωφροσύνη with martial courage; out of all this he construes an elaborate defence of Sparta against the charge that the Spartans let their allies down.

Does this speech mean that, in the *Histories*, ωφροσύνη is established as a typically Spartan quality, in contrast to the more outgoing nature of the radical democracy at Athens?<sup>23</sup> It seems unmistakable that ωφροσύνη is an important value at Sparta: Archidamus' speech centres on the contention that Sparta's policy is not shameful sluggishness but well-considered ωφροσύνη. And it is striking to see that his opponent Sthenelaïdas, who wins the day, also appeals to ωφροσύνη when he suggests that the Spartans simply should not let their enemies down if they are *κώφρονες* (1.86.2 ἢν κωφρονῶμεν). This seems to suggest that, though the Spartans obviously do not all share Archidamus' very defensive view of the virtue,<sup>24</sup> ωφροσύνη is important to them, and the appeal to the virtue seems, in Sparta, to be a powerful rhetorical tool.

On a number of occasions, indeed, we see that foreigners also tend to appeal to ωφροσύνη when pleading with the Spartans. One example are the citizens of Plataea who plead for their own lives (see section 3.1 above). Another example occurs in the same debate, when the Thebans defend themselves against the charge of taking sides with the Persians, by pointing out that Thebes was, at the time, neither a democracy, nor a moderate constitutional oligarchy after the Spartan model (an *ὀλιγαρχία ἰσόνομος*, 3.62.3), in which a certain measure of wealth is the condition for enjoying full political rights, nor a democracy, but a near-tyranny of a dynasty of very few men (*δυναστεία ὀλίγων ἀνδρῶν*, 3.62.3). This kind of government, they claim, is 'utterly opposed to laws and what is most sensible, and closest to tyranny' (*νόμοις μὲν καὶ τῷ κωφρονεστάτῳ ἐναντιώτατον, ἐγγυτάτῳ δὲ τυράννου*, 3.62.1). Here then, is an implicit compliment on the ωφροσύνη of the Spartan constitution, and unsurprisingly, the Thebans leave no doubt that in their view it is indeed oligarchy

<sup>23</sup> North (1966) 102-4. Edmunds (1975) 76-9 also argues that Thucydides' use of *κώφρων* betrays oligarchic or Spartan sympathies.

<sup>24</sup> For the resemblance of Archidamus to the wise and unheeded warners in Herodotus, see Pelling (1991) and Bischoff (1962).

rather than democracy which qualifies for this predicate. This happens when they implausibly claim that they did not actually occupy Plataea, but were asked in by the local aristocrats, who aimed at closer proximity to the oligarchic Boeotians elsewhere, and accordingly are described as *σωφρονισταί* (3.68.3) of their city: here, the stereotype of the *σώφρων* aristocracy, as opposed to ill-considered or rash democracy is invoked. This stereotype will further concern us in connection with the oligarchic reforms in 411 at Athens (see section 3.3 below).

There is even one passage in which the narrator drops his mask of objectivity, and confirms that for him, too, the Spartans are exceptionally *σώφρονες*. This is Thucydides' famous judgement on the Chians. The narrator praises the Chians for their exceptional quality of *σωφροσύνη* in prosperity, a quality which they are said to have shared only with the politically and constitutionally utterly different city of Sparta.

καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο οἱ μὲν Χίοι ἤδη οὐκέτι ἐπεξήσαν, οἱ δὲ τὴν χώραν καλῶς κατεσκευασμένην καὶ ἀπαθῆ οὖσαν ἀπὸ τῶν Μηδικῶν μέχρι τότε διεπόρθησαν. Χίοι γὰρ μόνοι μετὰ Λακεδαιμονίους ὧν ἐγὼ ἡσιθόμην ἠδαιμόνησάν τε ἅμα καὶ ἐσωφρόνησαν, καὶ ὅσῳ ἐπεδίδου ἡ πόλις αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ τὸ μείζον, τόσῳ δὲ καὶ ἐκοσμοῦντο ἐχυρώτερον. καὶ οὐδ' αὐτὴν τὴν ἀπόστασιν, εἰ τοῦτο δοκοῦσι παρὰ τὸ ἀσφαλέστερον πράξαι, πρότερον ἐτόλμησαν ποιήσασθαι ἢ μετὰ πολλῶν τε καὶ ἀγαθῶν ξυμμάχων ἔμελλον ξυγκινδυνεύσειν καὶ τοὺς Ἀθηναίους ἡσιθάνοντο οὐδ' αὐτοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἔτι μετὰ τὴν Σικελικὴν ξυμφορὰν ὥς οὐ πάνυ πόνηρα εἶναι [βεβαίως] τὰ πράγματα εἶη.  
(Th. 8.24.3-5)

After that, the Chians did not go out to meet them on the battlefield anymore, and the Athenians ravaged the country that was well-tended and had not suffered since the Persian wars. For as far as I am aware, the Chians were the only ones except for the Spartans to be both prosperous and *σώφρονες*, and as their *polis* grew, they strained harder to keep it in good order. Even in the case of the present defection, when they may seem to have acted rather recklessly, they did not have the nerve to undertake it before they had many strong allies to take part in the venture, and before they saw that the Athenians themselves were, after the Sicilian disaster, no longer denying the utterly desperate state of their affairs.

As transpires from the context, the Chians' *σωφροσύνη* is a combination of internal 'order' in the πόλις (*ἐκοσμοῦντο ἐχυρώτερον*) and good caution in external affairs, which shows in the fact that

their land suffered no plundering armies for decades. But if they are said to share these qualities with the Spartans, it has to be kept in mind that this complimentary comparison is between the general behaviour of the populations, not between their substantially different constitutions. If the narrator here shows undeniable admiration for Sparta, this is not by any means an explicit endorsement of the Spartan oligarchic constitution.<sup>25</sup> Up to that point, the mask of objectivity remains intact.

It thus seems that we are indeed supposed to take it that *σωφροσύνη* had a special appeal for Sparta, and that the author thinks that the Spartans generally lived up to their ideology. The link between *σωφροσύνη* and Spartan politics is confirmed by the use of *σωφροσύνη* as a political slogan by Athenians in favour of anti-democratic reforms after the Spartan model, as we will see in the next section.

### 3.3. *σωφροσύνη as a Political Slogan in Athens*

In the last section, we saw how *σωφροσύνη* is an important value in a constitutional oligarchy like Sparta. Likewise, *σωφροσύνη* in Athens tended to be claimed as a distinctive *ἀρετή* by elitist citizens who disapproved of the excesses of democracy and favoured a modified, more ‘moderate’ form of government. Something of this bias may already be present in the words of Diodotus in the debate on Mytilene (see section 3.1 above), but the connection becomes more clear in the debate on the expedition to Pylus. There, the narrator states that Cleon’s boastfulness was welcome to the *σώφρονες* among the people (4.28.5 *ἀκμένοισι ... ἐγίγνετο τοῖς σώφροσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων*), who reckoned that they would either beat the Spartans, or — even better — get rid of Cleon. Now it is hardly an indication of *σωφροσύνη* for a *πόλις* to decide on what seems a reckless undertaking in the hope that it may go wrong, and *τοῖς σώφροσι* can hardly be an auctorial commendation of the ‘prudence’ of such cynical and even irresponsible

<sup>25</sup> Cf. on this point Leppin (1999), 178. The passage is problematical for those who take Thucydides’ use of the term *σώφρων* as an unequivocal indication of elitist/oligarchic sympathies, notably Edmunds (1975) 76-9, for before 411, Chios was a democracy.

reasoning.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the phrase *τοῖς σώφροσι τῶν ἀνθρώπων* strongly suggests that Thucydides is thinking here of a more or less well-defined group of Cleon's opponents. The deliberate paradox of the *σώφρονες* welcoming what looks like an utterly irresponsible decision, once again shows Thucydides' awareness of the ways in which slogans are prone to suffer abuse.

If the passage quoted above does indeed show that *σωφροσύνη* tended to be claimed by the aristocratic opponents of the radical post-Periklean democracy, this tendency becomes much more evident after the Sicilian expedition, when the call for oligarchic reforms became much stronger. Thus at 8.53.3, Pisandrus states bluntly that Athens cannot hope to win the support of the Persian king, unless they adopt a 'more sensible' constitution and transfer all official posts to a limited number of people (*εἰ μὴ πολιτεύομεν τε σωφρονέστερον καὶ ἐς ὀλίγους μᾶλλον τὰς ἀρχὰς ποιήσομεν*). Here, *σωφρονέστερον πολιτεύειν* openly refers to 'founding an oligarchy'.

This use of *σωφροσύνη* as a political slogan is soon adopted by the narrator, again in an utterly sarcastic mode, to underline the unintended effects of the regime of the Four Hundred. After the reforms at Athens, the Athenians proceed to found oligarchies everywhere among their allies, with the claim that they bring *σωφροσύνη*. The cities, however, feel disinclined to accept the Athenian 'gift', and sense that they can now resist Athens without fear of retribution:

*σωφροσύνην γὰρ λαβοῦσαι αἱ πόλεις καὶ ἄδειαν τῶν πραττομένων  
ἐχώρησαν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀντικρυς ἐλευθερίαν τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀθηναίων  
ὑπούλου εὐνομίας οὐ προτιμήσαντες.*

(Th. 8.64.5)

As soon as the cities got *σωφροσύνη* and the opportunity to act without risks of punishment, they went straight for outright independence, without appreciating the festering *εὐνομία* offered by the Athenians.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. on this point Woodhead (1960), 314, Flower (1992), 56, and Leppin (1999), 177-8. North (1966) 111, and Coray (1993), 396, take *τοῖς σώφροσι* in a politically neutral sense, and assumes that it refers in a neutral way to 'men of sense' (North), or the 'mentally superior' (Coray: 'die geistig Souveräneren').

Here, *σωφροσύνη* is the ‘moderate’, oligarchic government Athens has now forced onto their allies; significantly, the term is once again associated with *εὐνομία*. But this *εὐνομία* is a sham. The allies do not appreciate the Athenian gift of *σωφροσύνη* and refuse to act as obedient subjects. On the contrary, they now feel that they can act without fear of retribution (they have *ἄδειαν τῶν πρακκομένων*), reject the Athenian pretence of *εὐνομία* and go straight for independence. Once again, the author shows how established values lend themselves for manipulative treatment and can easily become hollow in the process.

Even if, in the last book of the *Histories*, *σωφροσύνη* tends to become the special virtue of the Athenian oligarchs, the word is still by no means entirely monopolised by them. Thus the general Phrynichus, when predicting the allied states’ lack of enthusiasm for the oligarchic reform, is able to claim that the Athenian *δῆμος* acts as an *σωφρονιστής* in that it restrains the severity of the *καλοὶ καγαθοί* (8.48.7, for the term *σωφρονιστής*, see chapter 9.4).

### 3.4. *The Chapter on στάσις*

Throughout the earlier sections of this chapter, we have seen Thucydides to be exceptionally aware that actions tend to be evaluated in different terms by different people. Various kinds of restraint (whether in foreign or internal affairs) tend to be commended in terms of *σωφροσύνη* when people feel that restraint is called for, and deprecated in quite different terms when it is felt that a different response is in order. This implies that valuation is perceived as a more or less scalar phenomenon: *σωφροσύνη* is considered to be an appropriate measure of restraint, because the term applies when restraint is called for; in situations in which a different reaction is felt to be appropriate, such restraint will be felt to be ‘too much’ and called by the name of *βραδύτης* or some other deprecatory term. Similarly, assertive and/or aggressive behaviour will be called *ἀνδρεία* if such behaviour is called for, but *τόλμα* or something similar when displayed to excess. In extreme situations, people may incline heavily to aggressive behaviour and its opposite, restraint, may fall out of favour. It will then happen that *σωφροσύνη* is no longer a term that can be

applied meaningfully, because the kind of behaviour it recommends is not valued at all. Under such circumstances, it may seem a full 'transvaluation' of values has occurred.

This is, according to Thucydides, what happens in cases of *στάσις*, of which the civil war in Corcyra was the first and prime example during the Peloponnesian wars:

καὶ τὴν εἰωθυῖαν ἀξίωσιν τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐς τὰ ἔργα ἀντήλλαξαν τῇ δικαιοῦσει. τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἀλόγιστος ἀνδρεία φιλέταιρος ἐνομίσθη, μέλλης δὲ προμηθῆς δειλία εὐπρεπής, τὸ δὲ ᾠφρον τοῦ ἀνάνδρου πρόσχημα, καὶ τὸ πρὸς ἅπαν ξυνετὸν ἐπὶ πάν ἀργόν.  
(Th. 3.82.4)

And people changed the customary valuation of words in as much as they apply to deeds, in their judgements. For senseless daring was taken to be courageous loyalty to one's friends, and thoughtful deliberation was regarded as specious cowardice; the quality *ᾠφρον* was considered to be a cloak for what lacks manly courage, and complete perception of affairs was held to be an utter lack of efficacy.

As the narrator has it, the tendency to violence and rash action is so strong in circumstances of *στάσις*, and restraint and caution are so utterly thrown to the winds, that people would seem to think that violence is the only appropriate type of behaviour. *ᾠφροσύνη* will then become a qualification that never applies seriously, because restraint is never appreciated; it will seem a mere cloak for 'unmanly' diffidence.<sup>27</sup> In a state of *στάσις*, value terms still mean the same in as much as they still refer to the same type of behaviour; but one group of terms, those commending *ᾠφρων*-like, 'quiet' and 'careful' behaviour, cannot be meaningfully applied any longer because the behaviour that goes with it is totally 'out of fashion': the positive connotations of these terms do not conform to people's present negative evaluation of

<sup>27</sup> This means that it is not the *meanings* of the words themselves that have changed, but the situation in which people think they can be *meaningfully applied*, cf. Wilson (1982) 18ff. and Worthington (1982) 124, and cf. Hornblower (1991) ad loc.

There is no indication in the present passage that 'Thucydides' sympathies are ... Spartan or oligarchic' (Edmunds (1975) 78); τὸ ᾠφρον is not used here as a party parole; at 3.82.8, Thucydides even goes on how in times of *στάσις*, both oligarchs and democrats abuse their slogans.



restraint. Therefore other, more negative terms will be used instead. By contrast, rash and excessive action is now valued greatly, and terms like *ἀνδρεία* are over-employed in defence of all types of behaviour of this kind.

Another phenomenon of political life that becomes ruthlessly apparent in a situation of *στάσις* is the use of noble political slogans as a cloak for ignoble private ends.

οἱ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι προστάντες μετὰ ὀνόματος ἑκάτεροι εὐπρεποῦς, πλήθους τε ἰσονομίας πολιτικῆς καὶ ἀριστοκρατίας κώφρονος προτιμῆσει, τὰ μὲν κοινὰ λόγῳ θεραπεύοντες ἄθλα ἐποιοῦντο, παντὶ δὲ τρόπῳ ἀγωνιζόμενοι ἀλλήλων περιγίγνεσθαι ἐτόλμησάν τε τὰ δεινότατα ἐπεξήσαν τε τὰς τιμωρίας ἔτι μείζονος.  
(Th. 3.82.8)

For the leaders in the cities all used fine slogans, one group professing to honour equality of political rights for all the people, the other a κώφρων aristocracy,<sup>28</sup> but while they claimed to serve the common interest, they in fact held a private competition. While using all means in their struggle for supremacy, they dared the worst and went to even greater lengths to take revenge.

According to the narrator, both parties invoke non-competitive ideals (*κωφροσύνη*, *ἰσονομία*) to disguise the fact that their actual behaviour comes down to the ruthless pursuit of personal ends. Thus, there is a clash between the political ideologies and the actual behaviour of their adherents. This is the first occurrence in the *Histories* of κώφρων as a political slogan of the oligarchs, and it seems typical of Thucydides that it is immediately apparent how hollow the terms may be when compared to reality. What was implied in a case like that of the regime of the Four Hun-

<sup>28</sup> This is the traditional interpretation of these lines. Graham and Forsythe (1984) argue for taking *προτιμῆσει* with *κώφρονος* only: 'government by the best men, which is responsible *by reason of preferment*'. [My italics]. Against this interpretation, the following considerations seem to weigh heavily: (i) *προτιμῆσει* seems a necessary addition to explain how the preposition *μετὰ* (*ὀνόματος ... εὐπρεποῦς*) is to be understood; (ii) as the present chapter hopefully has shown, *κώφρων*, when used as a party slogan, is never qualified by a limiting apposition; there is no need to think that *ἀριστοκρατίας κώφρονος* would have been considered 'a rather banal expression' (Graham and Forsythe (1984) 34); (iii) 'responsible by reason of preferment' seems impossibly short, since it is by no means clear what qualities or assets would have been 'preferred'.

dred, that their ideology of *σωφροσύνη* is used to mask the ruthless pursuit of self-interest, is described here as a general mechanism in a city in discord.

#### 4. *Conclusion*

Herodotus and Thucydides both offer interesting, if very different views on the way in which *σωφροσύνη* is important in politics. (For schematic representations of our findings, see figures 8 and 9 in chapter 9.3). To a large extent, Herodotus focuses on individuals, and is an important source of stories that illustrate the problematical nature of the tyrannical temperament, a condition that is subtly shown virtually to preclude *σωφροσύνη*: Herodotus' tyrants lack 'prudence' or even 'sanity'; but it is subliminally suggested that their defective mentalities are the sources of many crimes against both mortals and gods. Thucydides focuses almost exclusively on the *πόλις* as a collective body, and offers rich insights in the ways in which *σωφροσύνη* can be invoked to influence a city's internal and external policy: in Thucydides, *σωφροσύνη* is used to urge both 'caution' and 'assistance of allies' abroad, and both *εὐνομία* and *εὐβουλία* at home.

Thucydides is also extremely aware of the elusive nature of value terms: people tend to value the same events in entirely different terms, and are prone to employing 'noble words' in the service of some particular, and not necessarily honourable, agenda. Many of the speakers in Thucydides who invoke these terms may seem 'sophistic', and indeed we often feel, in the speeches in Thucydides, to be close to the tone and content of the debates in the great political dialogues of Plato. Indeed, a very few cases excepted (the Chians, and to a large extent, prudent Spartans like Archidamus), it may well be the case that the moment the narrator makes one of his characters use a value term like *σωφροσύνη*, the reader is positively invited to feel alarmed and look beneath the surface. The same even applies to some of the relatively rare instances in which the narrator uses the terms himself; even there, he seems intent to show how people abuse their 'noble words', and more often than not, beneath the polished surface, there is a quite disturbing core.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### ARISTOPHANES AND THE ORATORS

#### 1. *Introduction*

In the last chapters, we have seen how the tragedians (chapters 4-6) and Herodotus (chapter 7.2) both focus on what can be regarded as larger than life characters, the tragic hero and the oriental despot. In this connection, we have been able to observe how for many of these ‘strong’ figures, *σωφροσύνη*, with its various elements of prudence and restraint, was an important, yet often intensely problematical quality. In a different sense, the *Histories* of Thucydides also have ‘big’ protagonists (chapter 7.3), given that the work shows great interest in the characteristics and behaviour of city states as a collective. With him, we have been able to observe the application of *σωφροσύνη* to various types of political ideology, and we have seen how our terms are used in the interest of persuasive, and sometimes downright manipulative strategies.

All these genres had comparatively little to say, by contrast, on the *σωφροσύνη* of the individual ordinary citizen (with the notable exception of the importance of female *σωφροσύνη* in Euripides). An important gap is filled, in this respect, by the comedies of Aristophanes and the speeches of the orators, as they show us what the quality means for the individual democratic citizen. Here we meet the ‘prudence’, ‘decency’, ‘justice’, and ‘inconspicuous behaviour’ of the individual ordinary citizen (and, in Aristophanes, we also get important information on what the virtue means for the young, especially for boys). This is very much the *σωφροσύνη* of popular morality, and here, more than in the epics, tragedy or historiography, we meet the conventional interpretations of *σωφροσύνη* that form a starting point for the discussion in a dialogue like *Charmides*.

Even given the considerable difference in genre between comedy and oratory, both speak to the ordinary citizen, and clearly appeal to his values and views of morality. Comedy, unlike tragedy, deals to a large extent with ordinary citizens in unusual,

comic situations, and even when famous figures from public life or mythology figure on the comic stage, we see them adopting the frame of mind of ‘ordinary’ men, often incongruously so. Speakers in the orators hope to win the vote of a jury of ordinary citizens, and they will support their plea by giving the impression that they are, essentially, decent ordinary fellows much like their addressees.

Given that both genres strongly appeal to conventional morality, it is indeed significant that the *κώφρων πολίτης* as we meet him in these two corpora is, by and large, a remarkably consistent figure. In Aristophanes (section 2), we see how the *κώφρων* citizen is moderate in pleasures and desires (but not to the extent of depriving himself of all that is pleasurable in life), obeys the laws and refrains from injustices like perjury, theft and violence. The most persistent trait of the *κώφρων* citizen in Aristophanes, however, is his inconspicuous behaviour in public life: the *κώφρων* citizen is essentially *ἀπράγμων*, and does not engage in lawsuits and politics. This is partly the comic stereotype, no doubt, that all politicians and jury members are corrupt, but some of the relevant passages adopt a more serious tone. In these cases, it is a source of regret that those who do not engage in the city’s affairs would be the best to manage these affairs. The sentiment appears to be wide-spread, and seems to appeal to a wide range of citizens, from the ordinary man who has no time for ‘*πράγματα*’ to the elitist citizen who regards the institutions and practices of the Athenian democracy with distrust.

Aristophanes is also an important source of information on *σωφροσύνη* in boys. The key text here is the defence of traditional education by the so-called ‘Strong Argument’ in *Clouds*. This *laudator temporis acti* extols the orderliness, obedience, decency and modesty of boys in the good old days, and while he is a caricature in his stereotypical view of the old days, and in his hypocritical delight in naming the vices of today, the ideal that he voices is essentially serious. In fact, for all the exaggerations and comic distortions, the decent boys of *Clouds* are essentially similar to the modest and shame-faced Charmides in Plato’s dialogue of the same name.

In speeches in court in the orators (section 3), the *σωφροσύνη* of the ordinary citizen is also much in evidence. Speakers before

the law courts will try to convince the juries that they are decent, virtuous citizens, and the *σωφροσύνη* of such a citizen consists, much as in Aristophanes, of (i) control of desires and emotions, (ii) aversion to injustice and violence, and (iii) aversion to *πράγματα* and inexperience with lawsuits. Pleas of this kind will be made with direct reference to the charge in hand, especially when the charge is one involving aggression and violence, but also strictly speaking *extra causam*, to support the speaker's case with the suggestion that *he* is a trustworthy fellow who is generally decent and disinclined to litigation. In such cases, the appeal to *σωφροσύνη* offers indirect support for the speaker's innocence or for the justice of his case.

Of course the works of the orators also contain a number of political speeches. As appears from these fourth-century speeches, the application of *σωφροσύνη* in Athenian political discourse (section 4) differs significantly from that of the earlier century, which we observed in Thucydides. No longer is *σωφροσύνη* connected to the ideals of an elite with oligarchic, or at least pro-Spartan sympathies. After the restoration of democracy in 404, *σωφροσύνη* becomes firmly connected to the Athenian democratic constitution, and especially to its earlier, 'unadulterated' stages from, say, Solon to the times of Perikles. In the politics of the Athenian city state, the *σώφρων* citizen is now a man of the people, *δημοτικός*, the anti-type of the *ὀλιγαρχικός*.

## 2. Aristophanes: *The σωφροσύνη of the Ordinary Citizen*

Many of the uses of *σώφρων* and cognates in Aristophanes are by now familiar, and need not detain us long. These include what the poet has to say on female *σωφροσύνη*,<sup>1</sup> as well as his jocular

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<sup>1</sup> What Aristophanes has to say on female *σωφροσύνη* is, for the reader of Euripides, mostly familiar. Quietude, obedience and marital fidelity are still the main aspects of the virtue. Thus, in the quarrel with the police officer and the chorus of old men, the women in *Lysistrata* claim that all they want to do is 'to sit *σωφρόνως* ('quietly') like a girl without offending anyone here' (*Lys.* 473f. ἐπεὶ 'θέλω 'γὼ σωφρόνως ὥσπερ κόρη καθῆσθαι | λυποῦσα μηδέν' ἐνθαδί), provided they are not irritated by anyone. Later on in the same scene, Lysistrata herself explains that it was their obedient *σωφροσύνη* that always kept the women from protesting against the war: 'Earlier on, in the beginnings of the

use of *σωφροεῖν* in the sense of 'being prudent'.<sup>2</sup> But on the other hand, Aristophanes has a lot to say about the *σωφροσύνη* of boys and normal male citizens. Both these groups figure prominently in what is undoubtedly the most famous passage on

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war, we used to put up with anything you men did, thanks to our *σωφροσύνη*' (*Lys.* 507-8 *ἡμεῖς τὸν μὲν πρότερον πόλεμον καὶ χρόνον ἡνεσχόμεθ' (ὑμῶν) ὑπὸ σωφροσύνης τῆς ἡμετέρας τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἅττ' ἐποιεῖτε*). As in Euripides (*Tr.* 422), Penelope is still the model of *σωφροσύνη*, and Euripides is criticised for not making *her* the subject of a tragedy (*Th.* 548).

Given that women in Aristophanes are often portrayed as remarkably self-assured (*Lys.*) and licentious (the alcoholic inclinations of the ladies in *Th.* and *Ec.*), it is perhaps remarkable that there is only one woman on stage who is explicitly said to lack *σωφροσύνη*. This is the old woman in *Women at the Assembly*, who takes advantage of the new laws and tries to rape a young man: his younger girlfriend tries to stop her by suggesting that she is not *σώφρων* to do so, since she might well have been his mother (*Ec.* 1038-40 *οὐ σωφρονοῦσά γ'· οὐ γὰρ ἡλικίαν ἔχει | παρὰ σοὶ καθεύδειν τηλικούτος ὢν, | ἐπεὶ μήτηρ αὖ αὐτῷ μάλλον εἴης ἢ γυνή*). 'You are not *σώφρων* to do so, for he is not of the right age to sleep with you; you could be his mother rather than his wife.')

<sup>2</sup> The prudential sense of *σωφροσύνη* is used more rarely, and always in jokes. It may be used, for instance, to commend the 'good sense' of what is not obviously the right thing to do. Thus, in *Wealth*, Hermes is commended for his 'good sense' not to care for the welfare of the other gods, only for himself (*Plut.* 1119 *σωφρονεῖς*): the notion that prudential *σωφροσύνη* amounts to taking good care of one's own interest, is converted here into an egoistic indifference to the well-being of one's peers. In *Frogs*, the standard phrase *εἰ σωφρονεῖς* is used to tell Euripides that he would be wise to run away and take shelter from the anger of Aeschylus (*Ra.* 853). In *Wasps*, Philocleon tells the woman who accuses him of stealing twelve loaves of bread that, instead of her ugly 'barking' she would do better to buy new wheat (*V.* 1404-5 *εἰ νῆ Δί' ἀντὶ τῆς κακῆς γλώττης ποθὲν | πυροὺς πρίαο, σωφρονεῖν αὖ μοι δοκεῖς*. 'If, by Zeus, instead of using this evil tongue, you would go and buy wheat somewhere, you would seem sensible to me.'). And in *Lysistrata*, the excited Spartan and Athenian soldiers are told that, if they have good sense (*Lys.* 1093 *εἰ σωφρονεῖτε*), they will put on their mantles, not because decency requires it, but lest one of the *ἐρμικοπιδαί* may come along and castrate them. Finally, reviving a familiar anti-feminine theme dating back at least to Semonides (Semonides 7), the grumpy old men of the chorus claim that they are *σώφρονες* (*Lys.* 796) to be as much disgusted with women as the young and chaste Melanion, not because 'chastity' is desirable in itself, but because the insolence of women they have experienced is a thing best avoided.

In *Knights*, the poet claims 'prudence' for himself too, reminding the audience that he himself 'prudently' refrained from presenting his first plays in his own production and under his own name and from 'jumping before the public in a foolish manner to talk rubbish' (*Eq.* 545 *ὅτι σωφρονικῶς κοῦκ ἀνοήτως εἰσπηδήσας ἐφλύαρει*). The reasons for this are the alleged fickleness of the audience, and his awareness that he first had to master all aspects of the comedian's art: his restraint is thus allegedly due to the 'prudence' of one who is afraid of being hissed off the stage. (For *σωφροσύνη* in relation to the poet and his play, cf. n. 3 below.)

ωφροσύνη in Aristophanic comedy, the ἀγών in *Clouds*.<sup>3</sup> In this debate, two so-called arguments or Λόγοι, 'Strong' and 'Weak',<sup>4</sup> vie for the dubious privilege to educate Phidippides. The Strong Argument (Κρείττων Λόγος) declares that his is the old-fashioned education, from the times 'when I flourished by saying what is just, and ωφροσύνη was current coinage' (Nu. 962 ὅτ' ἐγὼ τὰ δίκαια λέγων ἤνθουν καὶ ωφροσύνη 'νευόμιστο).<sup>5</sup> This ancient education is, rather inappropriately for a young man like Phidippides,<sup>6</sup> limited to the traditional basic education for young boys (with an emphasis on traditional forms of μουσική — modern music is not allowed (966-72) — and on gymnastics), and it is decidedly anti-intellectual in that it has nothing to do with the contemporary higher education of the 'sophists'. Throughout his exposé, 'Strong' emphasises aspects of good behaviour that are closely associated with ωφροσύνη in boys and young men: quiet (963, 983) and orderly (964) behaviour, physical hardiness (965), modesty and moderation in matters of food (981-2), and,

<sup>3</sup> It can hardly be a coincidence that in this play in which ωφροσύνη plays such a central role, the poet claims ωφροσύνη for the play itself too. In the revised παράβασις, he makes the — palpably wrong — claim that this comedy is ωφρων ... φύσει (Nu. 537), because it rejects all the vulgarities of comedy (phalluses, jokes on bald men, wild dances, old men waving their sticks, young men beating their fathers, processions with torches and cries of 'iou, iou') in favour of trusting its own ingenious plot. 'In the conflict between Aristophanes and his dramatic rivals, he aims to create comic irony by making complaints to the audience for rejecting the first production of the play, false claims to originality and superiority, false disapproval of popular forms of humour, and false claims to resisting repeated personal ridicule. In using these devices Aristophanes' purpose is to win the favour of the audience and the judges' (Fisher (1984) 152).

Elsewhere, in the political plays, the poet makes exaggerated claims of courage, stressing the risks of fighting the 'monstrous politicians that threaten the city', see Hubbard (1991), 61-3 (on *Knights*) and 118-21 (on *Wasps*), Rosen (1988) 59-82, Sluiter & Rosen (2003) 13-20.

<sup>4</sup> On the names, see Dover (1968), lvii-lviii, Nussbaum (1980) 50n.15, Fisher (1984) 192-3, MacDowell (1995) 137-8.

<sup>5</sup> Strong's speech combines traditional ideals of ωφροσύνη with traditional ideals of ἀνδρεία/masculinity; his opponent rejects both, and suggests that unmanliness and depravity makes for more successful and more pleasant living. See Rademaker (2003), esp. 116-19, on which part of the following is based.

<sup>6</sup> This is not to say, as MacDowell (1995) 139 suggests, that the speech is 'inappropriate to its context in the play', just that it is designed to be obviously and comically inappropriate for its addressee. The point is, of course, that traditional education had little to offer on the teaching of rhetoric and politics.



above all, a sense of decorum in sexual matters.<sup>7</sup> The result of this education will be that he will acquire an athletic body fit for war (986-9, 1005-8, 1009-1014), an aversion to the *ἀγορά*,<sup>8</sup> rhetoric and *πράγματα* (991, 1003-4, 1018), a sense of shame and honour (992), respect for his elders (993, 998-9), and he will refrain from disreputable contact with dancing girls and prostitutes (996-7).

No doubt, there is a good deal of comic exaggeration in this idealisation of the old days, and there is a very witty incongruity in hearing such exalted ideals formulated by a champion who takes an obvious delight in stating all the details of the forbidden behaviour.<sup>9</sup> But the humour of this situation is stronger if the ideals embraced by this hypocritical idealist are serious enough in themselves, and there are sufficient parallels to suggest that this is indeed the case: quiet orderliness and a sense of shame are, for instance, the essential ingredients of the intuitive, unreflective type of boyish *σωφροσύνη* as formulated and shown by Charmides in the dialogue of the same name, and decency and aversion to *πράγματα* are vital characteristics of the adult *σώφρων* citizen elsewhere in Aristophanic comedy. The nobility of Strong's ideals is, moreover, acknowledged by the Chorus, who take delight in the 'decent bloom' (1027 *σώφρον* ... *ἄνθος*) on the pedagogue's words. This is, then, a noble ideology defended by an unworthy spokesman.

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<sup>7</sup> Boys should not press their thighs together when sitting at school (965); avoid showing their genitals (973), wipe out the imprints of their genitals from the sand (975-6), not use oil below their navels (977-8), and not use seductive voices and lascivious glances when speaking to an *ἐραστής* (979-80).

<sup>8</sup> For the Athenian elite's disdain of the *ἀγορά* and those who made their trade in the place, including some politicians who were called 'men of the market', see Ostwald (1986) 203n.16, 214-15.

<sup>9</sup> Strong's hypocrisy has been described in strong terms by Dover (1968) lxiv-lxvi, Henderson (1975) 76-77, 217-218 and Fisher (1984) 198. MacDowell (1995) 139 argues against this: 'He likes the boys to be handsome but not to misbehave themselves, and this view was probably shared by a large proportion of the Athenian audience.' That may be true, but there can be no doubt that the audience will see in Strong, with his interest in boys and disgust at *καταπυγούνη*, a particularly vivid embodiment of the double standards (and the possibly wide gulf between ideology and practice) to which the duplicity of the Athenian norms with regard to paederasty (encouraging to the suitor, discouraging the boy) would lead. Cf. *Plut.* 153-9 and Cohen (1991) 199.

Weak (Ἡττων Λόγος), in his counter-attack, focuses on men rather than boys. He reduces *σωφροσύνη* to sexual decorum and resistance of pleasure, and dismisses this as a *κακὸν μέγιστον* (1060), because it brings no gains (1061-2) but deprives a man himself of all pleasures that make life worthwhile (1071ff.): boys, women, games, food, drink and laughter. Strong's counterexample of Peleus (1067), who was married to Thetis as a reward for his *σωφροσύνη*, is easily dismissed: Peleus was deserted because he was not a good, dominant lover (1068 *ὑβριστής*), and the rewards of *πονηρία* are far greater.

Weak then dismisses *σωφροσύνη* in its use of control of desires. The humour of his counter-attack is that he adopts an unashamedly amoral, hedonistic stance, and makes the attractive and unrealistic suggestion that one can get away even with gross immoral acts such as adultery, provided one has the rhetorical agility to refute all accusations: this suggestion is reinforced by the humorous admission by Strong that virtually all prominent and not-so-prominent Athenians have adopted Weak's immoralist stance and become *εὐρύπρωκτοι*. As has been noted, there are some similarities between Weak's ruthlessly egoistic view of the *ῥήτωρ* and that of Callicles in *Gorgias*.<sup>10</sup> The main difference is of course that Weak's immorality leads to a carnival-like subversion of values (climaxing in the argument of his pupil Phidippides, who ends up arguing that he is right to beat his father), and presents his programme in a tone of light-hearted inconsequentiality, whereas Callicles aims at the use and abuse of power, and is introduced by Plato to show the dangers of the immoralist's position at its grimmest.

Thus, where the *ἀγών* of *Clouds* humorously rejects *σωφροσύνη* in favour of shameless pursuit of one's own desires, other passages stress that the *σώφρων* citizen will refrain from injustice and violence. In *Women at the Assembly*, when Chremes is about to hand over his property and is derided for it by another man, he indignantly confirms that he does indeed think that the *σώφρων* man must obey the laws and do what has been ordered (*Ec.* 767 *τὸ ταπτόμενον γὰρ δεῖ ποιεῖν τὸν σώφρονα; | - μάλιστα πάντων.*), even

<sup>10</sup> North (1966) 97.

in this absurd situation. This is of course an absurd case of law-abidingness given the fantastic absurdity of the law in question, but the passage confirms that observing the instructions of the law is an entirely familiar, almost proverbial, interpretation of *σωφροσύνη*.

There is a similar kind of joke in *Plutus*, where Poverty argues that *σωφροσύνη* and *κοσμιότης* are on her side, and *ὑβρις* is the domain of Wealth. (*Plut.* 563-4 *περὶ σωφροσύνης ἥδη τοίνυν περανῶ κφῶιν κἀναδιδάξω | ὅτι κοσμιότης οἰκεῖ μετ' ἐμοῦ, τοῦ Πλούτου δ' ἐστὶν ὑβρίζειν.*) Here again, there is an absurd application (in an argumentation for the desirability of Poverty) of a quite 'normal' thought: that rich men lack the sound morals of the poor.<sup>11</sup>

The most persistent trait of the *κῶφρων* citizen in Aristophanes, however, is that he keeps away from law courts and politics, and leads a life of *ἀπραγμοσύνη*. The idea is implied by Strong's appreciation of the 'smell' of *ἀπραγμοσύνη* (*Nu.* 1007) and it recurs persistently throughout Aristophanic comedy.<sup>12</sup> In such contexts, it is suggested that decent citizens keep away from public life, especially from the courts, and that it is only the mad or the depraved who pursue such a career. Thus, it is said that Philocleon has come to his senses and is now *κῶφρων* (*σωφρονεῖ*, *V.* 748) when he has been healed from his earlier manic (744) court addiction, and a sycophant, who has described himself as 'in search of *πράγματα*' (*πραγματοδίφης*, *Av.* 1424) is told that there are other, decent jobs (*Av.* 1433 *ἕτερα ἔργα κῶφρονα*) by which one can make a living. Warfare is also described as an unwanted form of 'trouble'. The biggest joke of this type occurs when the son of the proverbial coward, Cleonymus, is invited to sing, and Try-

<sup>11</sup> The argument is employed in Lysias 24.17 by the speaker to support his claim that he, a poor invalid, cannot possibly be *βίαιος*.

<sup>12</sup> Carter (1986) portrays three groups of *ἀπράγμονες* among Athenian citizens: the noble youth (52-75), the peasant farmer (76-98) and the rich quietist. Hardly any character in Aristophanes belongs to that last type, but the two other types are quite common. For the former, one may think of the chorus from *Knights*, Bdelycleon in *Wasps*, and — to some extent — Phidippides in *Clouds*. Many protagonists belong to the second type, most clearly Dicaeopolis in *Acharians*, Trygaeus in *Peace* and Pisthetaerus and Euelpides in *Birds*.

gaeus tells him that 'you will not make a song of trouble, for you are the son of a *κώφρων* father' (*Pax* 1297 οὐ πράγματ' ἄισει· κώφρωνος γὰρ εἶ πατρός).<sup>13</sup> Here, the cowardice of the alleged deserter is turned into an asset: abstention from warfare and *πράγματα*.

A central factor in the ordinary man's aversion to *πράγματα* is that they take time, and are open only to those who are not forced to do the 'real work'. An example of this is the remark in *Acharnians* that all the young men evade military service by going abroad on an embassy, whereas the old have to do the real work: old Marilades ('Son of Coal Dust') has never been on an embassy, even though he is *κώφρων* *κἀργάτης* (*Ach.* 611), a *κώφρων* and hard-working fellow. By contrast, the elitist's view is that those who engage in *πράγματα* usually lack the necessary background to do so in a proper manner. Clearly nostalgic in tone is a choral passage in *Frogs*, where it is deplored that the city fails to honour and employ the noble, sensible, just and good men among their citizens, who have received the traditional education (*Ra.* 727-9 οὐκ μὲν ἴσμεν εὐγενεῖς καὶ κώφρονας | ἄνδρας ὄντας καὶ δικαίους καὶ καλοὺς τε κἀγαθοὺς | καὶ τραφέντας ἐν παλαίστραις καὶ χοροῖς καὶ μουσικῇ, 'men who are noble and sensible, just and good, were raised in the wrestling fields and with dance and music') but prefers newly-arrived villains instead.

Thus, an aversion to *πράγματα* is common to both the elitist citizen and the ordinary man, if perhaps partly for different reasons. Indeed, it seems that the ideal of *ἀπραγμοσύνη* appeals to 'quiet' citizens of all classes, from the rich elitists down to the ordinary men who have to work for their living and lack time for public life.

The clear antitype to the *κώφρων* *πολίτης* is the Sausage Seller of *Knights*, who in view of his depravity and lack of education is the only man who can do away with the 'Paphlagonian' Cleon. The Sausage Seller is of base origins (*Eq.* 181 ἐξ ἀγορᾶς) and was reared with beatings in the smokehouses (1235-6), he is shameless and has hardly learned anything at school except to steal,

<sup>13</sup> For Cleonymus' *δελία* and unmanliness, see *Eq.* 1372, *Nu.* 353, 673-80 (according to Socrates, he should be called Cleonymê), *V.* 19-20, 822-3, *Pax* 446, 673-9, 1295ff., *Av.* 289-90, 1473-81.

perjure and look others shamelessly in the face while doing so (1238-9); moreover, he is, like Weak's pupils, a *καταπύγων* as well: as an adult he earned a living by selling his sausage and occasionally 'getting fucked' himself (1242),<sup>14</sup> and he practised this trade at the city gates among the prostitutes.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, when this man is invited to start his *ἀγών* with Cleon, he is encouraged to show that 'it makes no sense to have been educated *σωφρόνως*' (*Eq.* 334 *νῦν δείξον ὥς οὐδὲν λέγει τὸ σωφρόνως τραφῆναι*). Here, then, we observe a paradoxical consequence of the ideal of *ἀπραγμοσύνη*: given that the *σώφρων* citizen is disinclined to engage in dubious affairs, it takes a man who is both shameless and ruthlessly assertive to deal with the depraved politicians of the day.

This, then, is the comic paradox of *σωφροσύνη* in the life of the *πόλις*: it takes a *σώφρων* to do a really good job in the administration of the city, yet the very same quality will deter people from the unpalatable aspects of public life. Thus, the irony arises that real-life politicians lack this political quality *par excellence*.

The centrality of *σωφροσύνη* for the administration of an ideal *πόλις* is shown by a passage in *Birds*. Here, in the heavenly city of Zeus as administrated by Basileia, *σωφροσύνη* figures, together with lawfulness and good council, among the elements from which a successful city is built. Basileia is said to wield 'Zeus' lightning, and all the rest: his good council, lawfulness and *σωφροσύνη*, his dockyards, invectives, the officer that pays the wages, and the jury pay of three obols' (*Av.* 1538-41 *ταμιεύει τὸν κεραυνὸν τοῦ Διὸς | καὶ τᾶλλ' ἀπαξάπαντα, τὴν εὐβουλίαν, | τὴν εὐνομίαν, τὴν σωφροσύνην, τὰ νεώρια, | τὴν λοιδορίαν, τὸν κωλακρέτην, τὰ τριώβολα*). The political ideals of *εὐνομία*, *εὐβουλία* and *σωφροσύνη* — serious ideals in the administration

<sup>14</sup> *Eq.* 1241-2 *τέχνην δὲ τίνα ποτ' εἶχες ἐξανδρούμενος; | ἡλλαυτοπώλουν καὶ τι καὶ βινεσκόμην. ἀλλαυτοπωλέω* here seems to be used in the 'obscene' sense of 'selling one's penis'. No certain parallels support this interpretation, but the *ἀλλὰς* seems to stand for the penis in Hipponax 84.16-7 *ἐγὼ δ' ἐβίνε[ον] | τε καὶ | ]ἐπ' ἄκρον ἑλκ[ων ὥσπερ] ἀλλάντα ψήχων*. Cf. Henderson (1975) [1991] 20, and Rosen, (1988a) 39-40.

<sup>15</sup> *Eq.* 1245-7 *καὶ μοι τοσοῦτον εἰπέ· πότερον ἐν ἀγορᾷ | ἡλλαυτοπώλεις ἐτεδὼν ἢ πὶ ταῖς πύλαις; | - ἐπὶ ταῖς πύλαισιν, οὐ τὸ τάριχος ὦνιον*. For prostitution at the city gates, cf. *Eq.* 1398-1400 and Sommerstein (1981) on *Eq.* 1246.

of the πόλις, as we have seen in Thucydides<sup>16</sup> — are mixed up here with all the everyday affairs of the city as vital constituents of a πόλις.

Thus, the εὐφρων πολίτης as he emerges from Aristophanic comedy is a man of decent morals: in control of his desires, averse to injustice and violence, and inconspicuous in the active public life of the city. In the emphasis on ἀπραγμοσύνη resides the big paradox of Aristophanic comedy: those who are best suited in principle to run the state, are often disinclined to engage in such affairs, and they may even be a bit too scrupulous and unassertive to deal successfully with less blameless colleagues.

### 3. *The Attic Orators: the εὐφρων πολίτης*

The image of the εὐφρων πολίτης that emerges from Aristophanes' comedies, is by and large confirmed by the use of εὐφρων and cognates in speeches in passages that defend the ἦθος of the speaker, or decry that of his opponents. In law speeches, especially, but in political speeches as well, speakers will do much to convey the impression that they are 'good' citizens and essentially trustworthy, and that their opponents are not. A favourite strategy is to make a claim of σωφροσύνη, and appeals to σωφροσύνη are made both *ad rem*, to prove that a speaker is innocent of certain types of aggression, and *extra causam*, to suggest that he is generally incapable of injustice.<sup>17</sup> From these passages, one can see what σωφροσύνη means for the citizen as an individual, and they form an essential supplement

<sup>16</sup> See chapter 7.3.1 on σωφροσύνη in relation to the internal politics of the state.

<sup>17</sup> The appeal to σωφροσύνη is of course not the only value to which speakers may appeal. Roisman (2003) 136-41, shows Demosthenes negotiating between σωφροσύνη and ἀνδρεία in the speech *Against Meidias*. Demosthenes claims that he was εὐφρων to refrain from instant retaliation for the physical abuse inflicted by Meidias, but goes to great lengths to suggest that he was 'manly' enough to have done so if necessary. 'Overall, the speech shows that there were rival notions or paths for a man to adopt in defending his honor and displaying his courage. Demosthenes claims that he was capable of taking the one but chose to follow the other.' (*ibid.* 140).

to the picture of the *κώφρων* normal citizen that arises from Aristophanic comedy.

The *κώφρων πολίτης* as portrayed by the Attic orators is one who is (i) 'decent' in social interaction and sexual matters,<sup>18</sup> and 'moderate' in his desires and expenses, (ii) 'just' and law-abiding' and not given to violence and *ὕβρις* against his fellow citizens, and (iii) 'quiet' and *ἀπράγμων* to the point of ignorance of the procedures of the law courts. As the juridical issues of cases vary, *κωφροσύνη* may be invoked to commend any of these qualities, or a combination of them.

A fairly full and concentrated statement of the ideology of the good citizen is provided by the speaker in Lysias 21. After citing his many liturgies to the state to refute the accusation of taking bribes and holding state money (21.16 *ὡς τοῦ δημοσίου χρήματα ἔχοντα*), he supports his claim with the oratorical cliché<sup>19</sup> that his biggest *λητιουργία* to the state is his quiet life: he has never profited from the state by holding *ἀρχαί*, has never been involved in law suits and has never been guilty of misconduct (21.18):

(οὐ γὰρ ἂν) τοῦτό γε εἰπεῖν ἔχοι τις, ὡς πολλὰς ἀρχὰς ἄρξας ἐκ τῶν ὑμετέρων ὠφέλημα, ἢ ὡς αἰσχροῦς δίκας δεδίκασμαι, ἢ ὡς αἰσχροῦ τινος αἰτίος εἰμι, ἢ ὡς τὰς τῆς πόλεως κυφορὰς ἀσμένως εἶδον· ὑπὲρ πάντων δὲ καὶ (τῶν) ἰδίων καὶ τῶν δημοσίων οὕτως ἡγοῦμαι μοι πεπολιτεῦσθαι καὶ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναί, ὥστε οὐδὲν δεῖν με ἀπολογήσασθαι περὶ αὐτῶν.

δέομαι οὖν ὑμῶν, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, τὴν αὐτὴν νῦν περὶ ἐμοῦ γνώμην ἔχειν ἥνπερ καὶ ἐν τῷ τέως [χρόνῳ], καὶ μὴ μόνον τῶν δημοσίων λητιουργιῶν μεμνήσθαι, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἰδίων ἐπιτηδευμάτων ἐνθυμείσθαι, ἡγουμένους ταύτην εἶναι [τὴν] λητιουργίαν ἐπιπονωτάτην, διὰ τέλους τὸν πάντα χρόνον κόσμιον εἶναι καὶ κώφρονα καὶ μήθ' ὑφ' ἡδονῆς ἡττηθῆναι μήθ' ὑπὸ κέρδους ἐπαρθῆναι, ἀλλὰ τοιοῦτον παρασχεῖν ἑαυτὸν ὥστε μηδένα τῶν πολιτῶν μήτε μέμψασθαι μήτε δίκην τολμήσαι προσκαλέσασθαι.

(Lys. 21.18-19)

<sup>18</sup> Decency in the sense of chastity remains very much the essence of *κωφροσύνη* where women are concerned: thus, Euphiletus claims that he thought his wife to be *πασῶν κωφρονεστάτην* (Lys. 1.10) when he means that he believed her to be faithful. The same meaning of *κωφροσύνη* applies in the speech *Against Neaira* (Ps.-D. 59.86, 111, 114), and cf. also Ps.-Andocides *In Alcibiadem* 14.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Isaeus fr. 13.4.

For nobody could claim either that I held many offices and profited from common property, or that I was involved in unjust law suits, or that I am guilty of any misconduct, or that I have been pleased to see the misfortunes of the city. In all affairs, both private and public, I consider myself to have been such a citizen — and I suppose you know it — that I have nothing about which I should apologise.

I ask you, gentlemen of the court, to keep the same opinion of me now that you have had hitherto. Do not only remind yourselves of my public services, but also keep my private behaviour in mind. For you should consider this a liturgy of the most laborious kind, ever to remain orderly and *ώφρων* throughout one's life, and not to allow oneself to succumb to desires or take pride in gains, but to prove oneself such a person that no citizen may disapprove of or have the nerve to bring a charge against.

According to the speaker, being *ώφρων* and *κόσμιος* is the greatest service to the state, and his *ωφροσύνη* shows in that he has not been chasing gains (no offices), has shown resistance to pleasure and desire (no misconduct) and gains (implying resistance to injustice), and has led an impeccably 'quiet' life (no law suits).

If the passage cited above provides us with the full ideology *in abstracto*, others provide more specific information on the individual senses in which *ώφρων* is used. Some of these will be discussed briefly in the overview that follows:

### 3.1. *Decency in sexual matters and social interaction and moderation in expenses.*

Orderliness in one's private life is perhaps *the* most common interpretation of *ωφροσύνη* in the orators, but this decency is frequently linked with moderation in expenses. The thought here seems to be that love costs money, money that cannot be spent in favour of the city, and has perhaps even to be procured by sordid methods. Thus, control of desire and control of expenses are often presented almost as two sides of the same coin.<sup>20</sup>

Orderliness in sexual matters is relevant to a large number of speeches, most notably Lysias 3 and Aeschines 1. Of these, the former shows the violent excesses to which erotic rivalry could

<sup>20</sup> See Dover (1974) 179 and refs.



lead, but the speaker is well aware that it is not only the actual charge of violence that may well be discreditable to him, but also the fact that some may consider him lacking in control of his desires.

ἐὰν δὲ περὶ τούτων ἀποδείξω ὥς οὐκ ἔνοχος εἰμι οἷς Σίμων διωμόσατο, ἄλλως δὲ ὑμῖν φαίνωμαι παρὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν τὴν ἑμαντοῦ ἀνοητότερον πρὸς τὸ μειράκιον διατεθείς, αἰτοῦμαι ὑμᾶς μηδὲν με χεῖρω νομίζειν, εἰδότας ὅτι ἐπιθυμῆσαι μὲν ἅπασιν ἀνθρώποις ἐνεστίν, οὗτος δὲ βέλτιστος ἂν εἴη καὶ σωφρονέστατος, ὅστις κοσμιώτατα τὰς συμφορὰς φέρειν δύναται.  
(Lys. 3.4)

Maybe I will be able to show with respect to these things that I am not liable to the charges that Simon brought under oath, but will still be thought by you to be foolishly infatuated with the boy in a way that does not befit my age. If so, I ask you not to lower your opinion of me, for you should be aware that desire is common to all people, and that he who is able to bear his fate in the most orderly way will be the best and the most *σώφρων*.

The speaker here shows awareness that even if he is able to disprove the formal charge of molestation, he may still be thought *ἀνόητος* because of his strong and ‘immature’ desire for the boy. His strategy of defence is to separate the desire itself from the behaviour that is its typical manifestation (a distinction that is clearly not automatically made by the public), and to argue that ultimately, *σωφροσύνη* resides not so much in the absence of disreputable desire, but in the ability to control it and not to lapse into disreputable behaviour.<sup>21</sup> Throughout the narrative that follows, he emphasises the circumspection with which he tried to avoid a confrontation with his rival.

In such a passage, the uses of *σώφρων* and *κόσμιος* are differentiated: the former is used here to indicate ‘self-control’, the latter to signal its manifestation in ‘orderly’ behaviour. Else-

<sup>21</sup> There is a parallel here to Phaedra’s idea of ‘conquering my foolishness by means of *σωφροσύνη*’ (E. *Hipp.* 398-9, see Chapter 6.5). In Antiphon fr. 59, this line of thought is pushed to the extreme claim that desire for what is wrong is a condition for *σωφροσύνη*, because in its absence, there is nothing to conquer. But this is clearly one step away from the popular conception of *σωφροσύνη*, in which the presence of strong temptation is hardly a *sine qua non*. Aristotle (EN 1146a9-12) makes a technical distinction between the *ἐγκρατεία* that controls strong desires and *σωφροσύνη*: according to him, the *σώφρων* does not have strong and bad desires, but the *ἐγκρατής* does (*ibid.* 1151b34-1152a3).

where, such a systematic distinction is not made, and the two terms are used as if roughly synonymous.<sup>22</sup> Given that *ώφρων* is the more flexible term, *κόσμος* will then frequently be one of the contextual signals that trigger the right interpretation of the word.

As we have seen, the speaker of *Lysias* 3 is aware that his desire is disreputable in itself, even if he proves innocent of molestation of his rival. One reason for regarding *έρως* with suspicion may be that in most cases, desire cannot be fulfilled without harm being done to others. Free-born girls and women belong to the custody of another man, and are 'ruined' if they give in to a lover; free-born boys lose the right to act as a free citizen. Thus, the speaker of *D.* 45.80 accuses his opponent of hiring (*εταίρειν*) a citizen and depriving him of his freedom of speech, of corrupting (*διαφθείρειν*) the wives of many, in short of being *ώφρων* during the day, but guilty of capital crimes at night.

The fact that a citizen boy who submits to prostitution forfeits his citizen rights is especially relevant to Aeschines' first speech, *Against Timarchus*. In this speech, Aeschines made a successful attempt to escape a sentence of corruption (on the occasion of an embassy to Philippos) by striking first: he prosecutes the official complainant, Timarchus, on the charges of playing the paid *εταίρος* to a number of Athenian men, and squandering his patrimony, offences both punishable with *ἀτιμία*, the loss of active citizen rights<sup>23</sup> (for, according to Aeschines, the man who wastes his own money and sells his body, is likely to 'sell' the interests of the city as well: here again, sexual profligacy and financial mismanagement go hand in hand). Throughout, Aeschines takes great efforts to demonstrate that the laws aim at instilling the *ωφροσύνη* which Timarchus allegedly lacks. The law on the assessment of public speakers (cited in full in 1.28-31) brackets prostitution with a number of various other offences, notably (i) beating and failing to sustain one's parents, (ii) desertion or evasion of military service, and (iii) squandering one's patrimony.

<sup>22</sup> For the association of *ώφρων* and cognates with *κόσμος* and cognates in the orators, see, for instance, *Isoc.* 1.15, 2.31, 3.38, 7.37, 15.24, *Is. fr.* 13.4, *Aeschin.* 1.22, 1.189, 3.2, *Lys.* 14.12, 14.41, 19.16.

<sup>23</sup> On the main issues in the case against Timarchus, see Dover (1978), ch. 1, Fisher (2001), especially 25-7, Harris (1995) 101-6.

But in the context of his speech, Aeschines interprets this law especially in terms of the ancient lawgiver's overriding concern for *σωφροσύνη*. Accordingly, Aeschines presents a quasi-systematic enumeration of prescriptions that show how *σωφροσύνη* for all ages was a top priority for the lawgiver. This concern is said to show, among other things, in prescriptions for the proper education of boys: these required that there were no school hours before dawn and after sunset, and that *παιδαγωγοί* had to be over forty years of age (they had to be 'in their most *σώφρων* age, *ἐν τῇ σωφρονεστάτῃ αὐτοῦ ἡλικίᾳ*, 1.11, apparently in order to be able to keep their hands off their pupils). Moreover, Solon, Perikles and other ancient politicians are cited as models of *σωφροσύνη* in that they spoke without vehement gesticulation, but kept their arm in their mantles (1.25)<sup>24</sup> — here, the fluidity of the concept of *σωφροσύνη* makes for a passing transition from decency *in sexualibus* to dignity in outward appearance.

But Aeschines is, of course, primarily concerned with decency in sexual matters, and throughout the second half of his speech, we find him maximising the conceptual gap between Timarchus' alleged prostitution and more readily acceptable forms of pederasty.<sup>25</sup> Thus, he puts great emphasis on the fundamental difference between a so-called *σώφρων ἔρως* (to which he admittedly has been susceptible himself, 1.136-7) and the mercenary love between Timarchus and his men. Instead of really making himself clear on the difference between these forms of *ἔρως*, he dwells on the 'historical' exemplum of Harmodios and Aristogeiton (1.140), Homer's reticent treatment of the love of Achilles and Patroklos (1.141ff.) and a number of quotes from Euripides (1.151-2), and continues to name a number of decent (1.156) and not so decent (1.158) *ἐρώμενοι* among contemporary Athenians. The conclusion of this long detour is that 'on one side, there are those who are loved according to *σωφροσύνη*, and on

<sup>24</sup> On physical and gestural indications of *σωφροσύνη*, cf. chapter 9.3.3.

<sup>25</sup> In modern times, the consensus is that submission to anal intercourse was regarded as unmanly, and was believed to reduce a man to the status of a woman, slave or foreigner, see, a.o., Winkler (1990), Halperin (1990), Stewart (1997) 156-71. A different view is taken by Davidson (1997), who argues that it is sexual insatiability that is especially offensive. For a discussion, see Fisher (2001) 45-53.

the other, there are those who do wrong against themselves' (1.159 *χωρὶς μὲν τοὺς διὰ σωφροσύνην ἐρωμένους, χωρὶς δὲ τοὺς εἰς ἑαυτοῦς ἐξαμαρτάνοντας*).<sup>26</sup>

If Timarchus is officially responsible for the law suit against Aeschines, Demosthenes is of course the mastermind behind the attack, and *Against Timarchus* is just one stage in the story of the continuing antagonism between the two leading politicians of their time. In the speeches that deal with these conflicts, personal animosity and downright slander play an important role, and allegations of the opponent's debased morals recur throughout. Thus, in his speech *On the False Embassy*, Demosthenes seeks to discredit Aeschines by recounting the story of the latter's presence (during the embassy) at a symposium at which a captive woman from Olynthus, 'beautiful but also freeborn and *σώφρων*, as the events proved' (D. 19.196 *εὐπρεπὴ μὲν ἐλευθέραν δὲ καὶ σώφρονα ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἐδήλωσεν*) refused to sing like a slave girl to the guests, and received a whipping in punishment. (Again, in the background, there is the idea that if she had complied, the woman would have been 'ruined'.) Further on, he points out that the statue of Solon at Salamis, cited as a paradigm of oratorical *σωφροσύνη* in Aeschines' *Against Timarchus*, is less than fifty years old, and hence not in any way authentic (19.251); he then goes on to conclude that it was not concern for the *σωφροσύνη* of Athens' youth that moved Aeschines' complaint against Timarchus (they are already *σώφρονες* and least of all in need of Aeschines as *σωφρονιστής*, guardian of *σωφροσύνη* — a reference to the official *σωφρονιστής* of the ephebes), but rather his wish to escape sentence himself (19.215-6).

In his reply, Aeschines states that he was happy to see that Demosthenes' slander about the Olynthian woman was ill received by the public, who apparently trust in Aeschines' *σωφροσύνη* (2.4 *ἦσθην δέ, ὅτ' αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆς αἰτίας ὄντα ταύτης ἐξεβάλετε, καὶ τῶν σεσωφρονημένων ἐν τῷ βίῳ μοι χάριν ἀπειληφέναι νομίζω*, 'I was glad that when he was making this

<sup>26</sup> The point of *ἐξαμαρτάνοντας* is that Timarchus and his like submit to acts that a free-born male would in principle only experience when suffering sexual assault: Timarchus has permitted this assault and is thus guilty, so to speak, of *ὑβρις* against his own body/himself, cf. 1.108, 1.116, 1.185.

accusation, you hissed him down,<sup>27</sup> and I take it that I have herewith received a reward for all the proofs of *ωφροσύνη* I have given throughout my life.') and further on compares his 'decent' in-law Philo to the effeminate Demosthenes (2.151, *κίναιδος*).<sup>28</sup>

In the final round of this battle of giants, Aeschines constructs, in the course of his speech *Against Ctesiphon*, a description of the citizen who is *δημοτικός*, 'well-disposed to the *dēmos*' and *ώφρων* — a description that is tailor-made to 'prove' that Demosthenes belongs to the opposite type of the *όλγαρχικός* and *φαύλος* (3.168-176).<sup>29</sup> According to Aeschines, the decent citizen (i) is of free birth on both sides of his lineage, (ii) has forebears who have done something good for democracy (or at least have done nothing against it), (iii) is *ώφρων* and *μέτριος* in his daily life, (iv) is *εύγνώμων* and eloquent and (v) *άνδρειος*. In a show of fake generosity, Aeschines grants Demosthenes a free-born father and eloquence, and then 'proves' him deficient on all other points: his mother is the daughter of a Scythian woman (i) and an Athenian who preferred exile to impeachment (ii); he has squandered his patrimony so that he has to live on what he earns as a *λογογράφος* and bribes from the Persian king (iii, a combination of two bits of slander: the loss of his patrimony is generally believed to be the fault of his guardians, and his alleged venality is intended to put his anti-Macedonian stance in a discreditable light); moreover, he is both perverted (iv)<sup>30</sup> and (v) so *δειλός* that in the days of the lawgiver, he would have suffered *άτιμία*.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> This is a subtle reply to another piece of slander in Demosthenes' speech: at 19.337, Demosthenes recounts how Aeschines, when making a living as a 'tritonist', was driven off the stage and hissed down by the public (*έξεβάλλετ' αυτόν και έξεκυρίττετ' εκ τών θεάτρων*).

<sup>28</sup> For allegations of effeminacy and sexual deviancy against Demosthenes, see Fisher (2001) 272-3 (ad Aesch, 1.131).

<sup>29</sup> The tone of the whole passage is not that the concept of the *ώφρων* citizen is 'still worth an orator's serious intention' (North (1966), 142) but rather that Demosthenes is its antitype in every conceivable respect.

<sup>30</sup> Because what seems to be a lack of firm evidence, Aeschines 'tactfully' uses the periphrase *ούτω γάρ κέχρηται και τώ έαυτού σώματι και παιδοποιάι ώστ' έμέ μη βούλεσθαι λέγειν ά τούτωι πέπρακται*, 'He has used his own body and his fertility in such a way that I would not wish to say what has been done to him' (3.173). In 2.151, he uses the term *κίναιδος* for Demosthenes.

<sup>31</sup> For Demosthenes' weak constitution that made him unfit for physical exercise, see Libanios' *Hypothesis*, § 3.

Aeschines' characterisation of the decent citizen, the antitype to Demosthenes, interestingly includes both a very general, inclusive use of the term *ώφρων* and a more specific use: in the broader use, the adjective indicates the generally 'decent' qualities of the good citizen; in the more specific use, *ώφρων* commends 'sensible' moderation in expenses, and with *μέτριος* is opposed to Demosthenes' depraved morals and his lack of parsimony.

As the passage shows, *μέτριος* is another term often added to *ώφρων* in order to establish the right interpretation of 'moderate' in one's expenses. In this sense it functions much like *κόσμιος* in the sense of 'orderly' or 'decent', providing the more specific term to trigger the appropriate interpretation of the more general *ώφρων*.<sup>32</sup> In this sense of 'moderation', one also finds expressions like 'managing one's life in a sensible way' (Isoc. 1.46 *ωφρόνως τὸν αὐτοῦ βίον οἰκονομεῖν*) or 'saving one's property through *ωφροσύνη*' (D. 38.26 *ωφροσύνηι τὰ ὄντα σώζοντες*). As we have seen, the contrast here is, essentially, between parsimonious administration of one's own estate and irresponsible expenses in pursuit of one's own pleasures: in this respect, the *ωφροσύνη* of moderation is a kind of 'sub-group' under the general heading of 'control of desire'.

Another striking passage in which *ωφροσύνη* is used to commend propriety in sexual matters, and is then linked to 'justice' in financial matters is found in Nicocles' letter to his people, written by Isocrates. In this passage (3.36-44), the Cypriot ruler claims that ever since he became king, he has consistently practised *ωφροσύνη*<sup>33</sup> (§ 44 *ἤκηκα τὴν ωφροσύνην*) and has not touched any boy or woman other than his own wife (36 *ἐξ οὗ τὴν βασιλείαν ἔλαβον, οὐδενὶ φανήσομαι νόματι πεπλησιακῶς πλὴν τῆς ἑμαυτοῦ γυναικός*), because he did not want to offend any

<sup>32</sup> For the association between *ώφρων* and *μέτριος*, or *ωφροσύνη* and *μετριοτής*, in the context of 'moderation', see Isoc 7.4, D. 21.128, 25.76, 25.77, 58.62, *Exord.* 43.2

<sup>33</sup> Though Nicocles is, of course a king, he claims for himself much the same qualities that apply to the individual citizen of a democratic *πόλις*: 'Oddly enough, the criteria for assessing a king's actions ... turn out to be provided by ordinary, unwritten codes of civility among members of a society', Poulakos (1987) 28. Poulakos rightly speaks of a 'democratic vein' traversing this text (*ibid.* 29).

κύριος or father (§ 36), regarded it as despicable for a king to preach morality without himself being more *ώφρων* than his citizens (§ 37), valued monogamy as a means to a harmonious marital life (§ 38), and did not want ‘unlawful’ children because *ωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*, unlike *ἀνδρεία* and *δεινότης*, are the exclusive property of people who are truly *καλοὶ καγαθοί* (§ 43). In this passage too, it is clear that the scope of *ωφροσύνη* extends beyond mere sexual abstinence to other qualities, for the King claims that *δικαιοσύνη* is best tested in times of need, *ἐγκρατεία*, self-control, in one’s youth, and *ωφροσύνη* when one has the power (§ 44 *ἐν ταῖς δυναστείαις*).<sup>34</sup>

A few passages contain interesting observations on the outward manifestations of *ωφροσύνη*. We already saw how Aeschines invoked the example of Solon (1.25) as a *ώφρων* orator who refrained from wild gesticulation. Quiet and dignified behaviour is also treated as a, potentially misleading, outward manifestation of *ωφροσύνη* in Apollodorus’ first speech against Stephanus (D. 45). In this speech, the speaker’s adversary, Phormio, is said to walk about with a consistently stern expression (§ 68 *ἐσκυθροπακώς*), which according to the speaker does not testify to his *ωφροσύνη* but rather to his misanthropy; conversely, the speaker himself may make an unfavourable impression because of his looks, and his habits of walking fast and talking loud, but *he* has been *μέτριος* (§ 78) in his expenses so as to be able to spend some money on the *πόλις* whereas Phormio has allegedly hired a boy to be his *ἐταῖρος* and has corrupted many women: the conclusion from this is that Phormio is *ώφρων* by day but does things at night that should call for a death sentence (45.80 *μεθ’ ἡμέραν εἰὶ τὸν ώφρων τὴν δὲ νύκτ’ ἐφ’ οἷς θάνατος ἢ ζημία ταῦτα ποιεῖς*). Here then, the ‘quietness’ of appearances is contrasted to ‘real’ inner *ωφροσύνη*.

Thus, we see that in private life, the *ώφρων* citizen is orderly and in control of his desires (*κόσμιος*), moderate in his expenses (*μέτριος*), and preferably ‘quiet’ and dignified in his behaviour. Throughout, the argument of having lived an ‘orderly’ life —

<sup>34</sup> Isocrates frequently voices the familiar idea that a monarch can do as he pleases, and thus needs self-control. Cf. Isoc. 1.21, and see Poulakos (1997) 41–3 on the corruption of power.

more often than not strictly speaking *extra causam* — can be invoked in one's own defence, or said not to hold good in the case of ones' adversary.<sup>35</sup>

### 3.2. *Abstention from Injustice and Violence Against Others*

Moderation and orderliness are aspects of *σωφροσύνη* that primarily concern the private life of the individual citizen, more specifically the regulation of one's pursuit of pleasures. In a second group of uses, *σωφροσύνη* commends respect for the rights of others, and amounts to lawfulness and abstention from injustice and violence. In these contexts, *σωφροσύνη* is associated with *δικαιοσύνη* and opposed to *παρανομία* and *ἀδικία*, or *ὕβρις*.

Thus, the defendant in Lysias 1 spells out for his public under which conditions he would have been 'wrong' or 'right' to kill Eratosthenes.

εἰ μὲν γὰρ λόγων εἰρημένων ἔργου δὲ μηδενὸς γεγενημένου μετελθεῖν ἐκέλευον ἐκείνου, ἡδίκουν ἄν· εἰ δὲ ἤδη πάντων διαπεπραγμένων καὶ πολλάκις εἰσεληλυθότος εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν ἐμὴν ὠιτινιοῦν τρόπῳ ἐλάμβανον αὐτόν, ὥφρων' ἄν ἐμαυτὸν ἡγούμην.  
(Lys. 1.38)

If, on the one hand, it had been on the basis of mere talk and no real fact that I gave order to send for him, I would indeed have been in the wrong. But if all had already been accomplished and he had frequently entered my house, and I then took hold of him in whichever way, I would consider myself *ὥφρων*.

The speaker's point here is that under the circumstances, the killing of Eratosthenes was no crime, and that he was *ὥφρων* because he was not guilty of an *ἀδικία*.

One of the clichés of the courts in connection with *σωφροσύνη* and (in)justice is that punishment of the guilty will deter future transgressors, and make them more *ὥφρονες* and *δίκαιοι*. The following passage is from a speech *Against Alcibiades* that goes under the name of Andocides:

<sup>35</sup> See, e.g., Lys. 14.41 (*In Alcibiadem I*), 21.19 (*Apologia Dorodokias*). An explicit statement of the practice of using such arguments, and of the impossibility for the adversary to do so, is made by the speaker in (Ps.-)D. 25 (*Against Aristogeiton I*), §§ 76-7.



Οὐ μόνον δὲ αὐτῶν ἔνεκα τῶν παρανομούντων, ἵνα δίκην διδῶσιν, ἐπιμελείσθαι ἄξιον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων, ὅπως τούτους ὀρώντες δικαιοῦτεροι καὶ σωφρονέστεροι γίνωνται.

(Ps.-Andocides 4.40)

It is not only for the sake of those who transgress against the law, in order that they be punished, that it is worthwhile to take care of their punishment, but also for the sake of the others, that they may see them and then become more law-abiding and more *σωφρονες*.

The point of such passages is that others, when they see how the guilty are punished for their trespasses, will learn to refrain from such acts themselves. In view of the restraint implied in such a scenario of ‘crime prevention’, it is very appropriate to state that by witnessing a stern and just judgement, people will become not only *δικαιοῦτεροι* but *σωφρονέστεροι*, because it is not just lawful behaviour in general that is at stake here, but more specifically the willingness to restrain criminal impulses.

When *σωφροσύνη* can be used to applaud the willingness to restrain criminal impulses, *ὑβρις* is often used as an antonym. Thus, the defendant in Lysias’ speech *For the Disabled Man* claims that the prosecutor’s allegation that he is a *ὑβριστής*, violent and unruly of character (24.15 λέγει δ’ ὡς ὑβριστής εἰμι καὶ βίαιος καὶ λίαν ἀσελγῶς διακειμένος) cannot be true for various reasons, including the commonplace consideration that poverty forces him to be *σώφρων* (*ibid.* 17 οἱ δὲ πένητες ὑπὸ τῆς παρούσης ἀπορίας *σωφρονεῖν ἀναγκάζονται*, ‘For the poor are forced to be *σώφρονες* by the need they are in.’). Similarly, the defendant in Antiphon’s Third tetralogy counters the claim that the dead man cannot have been the aggressor in their fight because of his age, with the assertion that this would only hold ‘if it were a fact of nature that the young commit *ὑβρις* and the old are *σώφρονες*’, (Antiphon 4.4.1 εἰ μὲν γὰρ .... κατὰ φύσιν ἦν ὑβρίξειν μὲν τοὺς νέους, *σωφρονεῖν δὲ τοὺς γέροντας* ...). This passage plays with the stereotypical view that young men are given to *ὑβρις* and incapable of *σωφροσύνη*:<sup>36</sup> the speaker claims that youth is not a necessary condition for *ὑβρις*, and old age does not preclude it.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Antiphon 4.3.1, 4.4.1, Lys. 24.16, Demades fr. 84.19.

<sup>37</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that the young are not always capable of *σωφροσύνη*, it is also acknowledged that they have less opportunity for

Whereas lawful behaviour and abstention from violence in social interaction is important in the orators, they rarely show the tragedians' preoccupation with the religious implications of violence. *ᾠφρονεῖν* is used in opposition to *ἀσεβεῖν* only in connection with the notorious affair of the Hermocopidae (Lys. 6.54, 14.41). Elsewhere, the juridical discourse of the court speeches is conducted in predominantly secular terms, and the ethos of the *ᾠφρων* citizen is rarely acknowledged to be determined by religious considerations.

### 3.3. *Quietness and Inexperience of Conflict*

As in Aristophanes, the ideal citizen who lives a life of decency, moderate expenses, and avoids injustice against his peers, is also a model of peacefulness; in the orators, *ᾠφροσύνη* is frequently associated with *ἡσυχία* and the like.

This quietude is not the politically charged, pro-Spartan *ἀπραγμοσύνη* of the fifth century that we met in Thucydides, and which has left a few traces in the comedies; rather, what we have here is the inconspicuous behaviour of the individual citizen in the democratic *πόλις*, who avoids offending others and bringing charges against his peers. The claim to *ἡσυχία* is, again, a strategy to underline the innocence of the speaker.

In Isaeus' speech *On Cleonymus*, for instance, the concept of *ᾠφροσύνη* is linked to the well-known cliché of inexperience with the law courts: the speakers claim to have been brought up in such a *ᾠφρων* manner that they have never visited the law courts even to listen (Isaeus *On Cleonymus* 1 *τότε μὲν ... οὕτως ... ᾠφρόνως ἐπαιδευόμεθα, ὥστ' οὐδὲ ἀκροασόμενοι οὐδέποτε ἤλθομεν ἐπὶ δικαστήριον*). In similar terms, the speaker of Lysias 19 cites his 'silence' throughout his life in support of his credibility:

ἀλλὰ πρὸς θεῶν Ὀλυμπίων, ὧ ἄνδρες δικασταί, βούλεσθε ἡμᾶς  
δικαίως ᾠσαι μᾶλλον ἢ ἀδίκως ἀπολέσαι, καὶ πιστεύετε τούτοις

---

displaying other virtues, and in some contexts, it is indeed claimed that *ᾠφροσύνη* is, in principle at least, the virtue *par excellence* of the young. See Isoc. 1.15, 8.48, 9.21, Hypereides *Epitaphios* 4.15.

ἀληθῇ λέγειν, οἳ ἂν καὶ σωπῶντες ἐν ᾧπαντι τῷ βίῳ παρέχῃσι  
 σώφρονας σφᾶς αὐτοὺς καὶ δικαίους.  
 (Lys. 19.54)

I implore you in the name of the Olympian gods, gentlemen of the court: you should choose to save us justly rather than unjustly to destroy us. And do not doubt that those people speak the truth, who also by their life-long silence prove themselves to be σώφρονες and just.

In such cases, the argument of silence and quietness provides another *extra causam* argument, closely related to the arguments from orderliness and moderation. Speakers are also aware that this type of argument is open to rhetorical misuse: in Lys. 26.5, the speaker claims that the true test of Euandrus' ἡσυχιότης is not his present σωφροσύνη but his former lawlessness (in the time of the oligarchic revolution):

πρὸς δὲ τὴν ἡσυχιότητα τὴν τούτου, ὅτι οὐ νῦν δεῖ αὐτὸν ἐξετάζειν εἰ  
 σώφρων ἐστίν, ὅτ' αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔξεστιν ἀσελγαίνειν, ἀλλ' ἐκείνον τὸν  
 χρόνον σκοπεῖν, ἐν ᾧ ἐξὸν ὁποτέρως ἐβούλετο ζῆν εἴλετο  
 παρανόμως πολιτευθῆναι.  
 (Lys. 26.5)

In answer to his quietude I state that one should not investigate whether he is σώφρων at present, now that he has no chance to be unruly, but rather look at those days past, in which he had the opportunity to choose between two ways of life, and preferred unlawful citizenship.

Here, the crimes of the past are the accused's crimes during the oligarchic regime of the Thirty and the civil war between oligarchs and democrats. According to the speaker, it is these crimes that count against the defendant's σωφροσύνη, not his present ἡσυχία. Incidentally, the passage shows that ἡσυχία is no longer the prerequisite of the anti-democratic elite, as it once was thought to be. The political slogans have changed, and ἡσυχία now rather belongs to the individual democratic citizen, who is unassuming and not quarrelsome in respect to his peers.

Thus, we see how, for the citizen of the Athenian πόλις, σωφροσύνη is linked to an extensive ideology of civic morality. The σώφρων defendant in the orators is in many respects a blameless citizen. He is orderly in his desires and therefore also moderate in his expenses, so as to be able to take a substantial

share of expenses for the public good. He refrains from injustice and violence against his fellow citizens. And in general, he is not a litigious person but leads a quiet and dignified life far away from the courts.

#### 4. *The σωφροσύνη of the πόλις*

If the orators have much to say on what σωφροσύνη is to the individual citizen, they are, on the whole, surprisingly reticent on the relevance of σωφροσύνη to the community of the city as a whole. Generally speaking, there is little to match the use of our terms as slogans for a certain type of policy that was such a marked feature of the speeches in Thucydides. Of course, in political speeches especially, speakers try to persuade the audience that their own proposals are beneficial to the πόλις, and that those of the opponents are not. In such contexts, the standard directive phrase 'ἐὰν σωφρονῇτε (if you are σώφρονες), you will do as I propose' is used many times to drive home this point. σωφρονεῖν is used in its prudential sense here: 'x, which I propose, serves the interests of the πόλις and its citizens; therefore, if you are σώφρονες, you will do x'. Isocrates uses the phrase, for instance, to back up his plea for a Pan-Hellenic peace,<sup>38</sup> and Demosthenes does so to drive home the point that it would be unwise to trust Philippos.<sup>39</sup>

Apart from this persuasive/directive use of the verb σωφρονεῖν, σωφροσύνη is mainly, in the orators, a virtue of restoration. The most persistent idea is that the return to democracy after the oligarchic revolutions marks a return to a σώφρων form of constitution. The late fifth-century use of σωφροσύνη as a party

<sup>38</sup> Isocrates' main speeches in favour of a Pan-Hellenic peace are *On Peace* (8), see §§ 58, 63, 104, 119 for σωφροσύνη in this connection, and the *Panathenaicus* (12), see especially § 14. Where σωφροσύνη is invoked in this connection, the argument is that peace is more expedient, not that keeping peace is *intrinsically* more σώφρων than waging war. This can be seen from the *Panegyricus*, where Isocrates argues for Hellenic unity as a means to military superiority over Persia, and pleads for a prophylactic attack on Persia (4.197).

In *Archidamus* (9.59), the Spartan speaker pleads for a prudent attack on Messene; in *Philippus* (5.7), the speaker congratulates Philippos and Athens on the prudence of their peace treaty.

<sup>39</sup> See 1.27, 2.22, 3.20, 6.19, 6.23, 7.19.

slogan for aristocrats has, of course, become obsolete now that oligarchic sympathies have fallen in disrepute, and the *ωφροσύνη* of the restored democracy is the restoration of peace after the violence of the civil wars. In this connection, Aeschines speaks of *ωφρόνως πολιτεύεσθαι*,<sup>40</sup> contrasting the restoration of peace to the violence of war and civil strife; many years after the events, he still cites Demosthenes as the very opposite of a *δημοτικός* and *ώφρων* citizen (3.168-176, see section 3 above). Isocrates states that after the end of the civil war, the citizens have become *ωφρονέστατοι* and *εύδαιμονώτατοι*.<sup>41</sup> Andocides (1.109, 140) stresses the vital contribution of amnesty to this new-found harmony in the city, unsurprisingly so, because amnesty is what he hopes to obtain himself.

Another recurrent theme, notably in Isocrates, is that the Athenian democracy in its early stages, roughly from Solon down to the age of Pericles, showed rather more *ωφροσύνη* in its attitudes and its handling of political institutions than the present generations. The *Areopagiticus* is a plea for the restoration of the court of that name, and dwells extensively on the *πολιτεία* of the past, with its alleged concern for *ωφροσύνη*. A dominant idea here is that in its humble origins, a city is forced to moderation, *ωφροσύνη* and *μετριοτής* (7.4), and to careful deliberation (7.14). These are supposed to lead to growth, whereas wealth and ill judgement is followed by decline. This model of growth and subsequent decline is illustrated by references to the historical examples of Sparta (7.7) and Athens itself (7.6). Throughout the speech, the frugality of the ancient city is linked to the *ωφροσύνη* in private life of its individual citizens, for which the Areopagos is believed to have been an essential safeguard. As such, the integrity of the *πόλις* of the old days consists in its superior ability to imbue its citizen with the characteristic virtues of the *ώφρων πολίτης*, and *ωφροσύνη* comprises much the same traits that we met in section 3 above. Similarly, in the *Panathenaicus*, *ωφροσύνη* is associated with the time before the Athenian supremacy at sea (12.115),<sup>42</sup> and the *ωφροσύνη* of that

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<sup>40</sup> Aesch. 2.176.

<sup>41</sup> Isoc. 18.46.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Poulakis (1987) 42.

period is again said to show in the superior civic morality of its citizens (12.138, 140, 151). Pericles is named as a model of *σωφροσύνη* in *De bigis* (16.28) and *Antidosis* (15.111), and the proto-democratic Athenian leader Theseus in the epideictic speech in praise of Helen (9.31, 38).<sup>43</sup> In a similar vein, Aeschines (1.25) cites the dignified posture of the ancient politicians of Solon's time, and Demosthenes (3.26) praises the small and inconspicuous houses of the politicians of the past as proof of their *σωφροσύνη* in private life.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, we see that in the orators, *σωφροσύνη* as a political virtue clearly belongs to democracy; there is now no trace of a link between *σωφροσύνη* and a predilection for an elitist oligarchic government. The content of this democratic *σωφροσύνη* is hardly spectacular, however. It mainly consists in a concern for the morality of the citizens: the *σώφρων* city will take care that its citizens will behave in the orderly, moderate, just and quiet way that is appropriate to the individual *σώφρων πολίτης*.

### 5. Conclusion

The ideas on the *σωφροσύνη* of the individual male citizen in the orators complement, and largely confirm, the data from Aristophanic comedy. In combination, the two genres show what *σωφροσύνη* typically means to the ordinary male citizen, much as Euripides did in the case of women. (For diagrams that try to visualise the network connections between the uses of the terms, see Figures 10 and 11 in Chapter 9.3.)

Central to the conception of the *σώφρων* man in both these genres is 'control of desire' in social interaction and sexual conduct, and 'moderation' in expenses. Besides, the *σώφρων* citizen is 'just' and 'disinclined to violence'. The use of these terms in these last two senses is more marked in the orators, which is understandable in view of the settings in which the speeches were

<sup>43</sup> Theseus' incontestable *σωφροσύνη* is cited in connection with his infatuation with Helen, in proof of the rather more debatable point that the latter deserves praise (an 'argument from authority', cf. Bons (1996) 188).

<sup>44</sup> On the ideal of the 'Solonian' democracy, see Hansen (1991) 296-300, and Thomas (1994).

pronounced, but it is also relevant to some Aristophanic antitypes of the *σώφρων πολίτης*, such as the Sausage Seller from *Knights*.

Finally, the *σώφρων* citizen is ‘quiet’ and *ἀπράγμων*. In comedy, the ideal of *ἀπραγμοσύνη* is very marked, and connected with a strong desire for an escape from the cumbersome *πράγματα* of a city in trouble. In the orators, ‘quietness’ plays an important role in passages where the speaker argues that he is not one to get involved in law suits and trials in general, and hence is unlikely to be guilty in the present case.<sup>45</sup>

In political contexts, speakers use the phrase *ἐὰν σωφρονῇτε* in support of various policies: thus, Isocrates suggests that it is expedient to go for a Pan-Hellenic peace; Demosthenes, by contrast, commends war on Philippos. On the theoretical level, the orators praise the restoration of democracy as a return to *σωφροσύνη* in contrast to the violence of the civil war, and claim that the *σωφροσύνη* of a *πόλις* consists in her concern for the morality of the private citizen (and that democracy in its original ‘Solonic’ form was rather more *σώφρων* in this respect than its contemporary counterpart). In both respects (absence of civil strife, and civil morality), *σωφροσύνη* is perceived as a contribution to the stability of the *πόλις*. Ultimately, it has a similar function in the works of Plato (chapter 10), but Plato’s political theories are on a different level of sophistication altogether.

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<sup>45</sup> All three aspects of *σωφροσύνη* will be seen to be used in the Platonic dialogues, not only in dialectics, but also, and arguably more memorably, in the portrayal of Socrates, who, in his control of *ἔρως* (*Charmides*, *Symposium*), his law-abiding justness (e.g. *Gorgias*) and his inactivity in politics (*ibidem*), shows many traits of the superlative *σώφρων πολίτης*.

## CHAPTER NINE

### PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS: THE MEANING OF *SOPHROSYNE* IN PLATO'S TIME: A SYNCHRONIC DESCRIPTION

#### 1. *Introduction*

It is time now to take stock of our findings in the previous chapters (2-8) and provide a synchronic description of the meanings of *σωφρων* and cognates that were available to Plato.

In the first part of this overview (section 2), I will present the various clusters of uses of our terms that I think can be identified on the basis of our data. I will present them in an order that is designed to emphasise the family resemblance between the various clusters of uses, and therefore, I will start with the more obviously 'intellectual' uses, and end with the most evidently 'moral' ones. If this order helps to bring out the family resemblance between the various senses of our terms, it does *not* imply that the first senses to be discussed are by any means the most central ones. In fact, the uses that seem most easily activated without extensive contextual preparation are those commending 'control of desires' in men, 'fidelity' in women, and 'quietness'/'obedience' for boys and girls; these I take to be the prototypical senses (and they are discussed, in connection with some argumentation for their centrality) in the central section of the survey under numbers 6-7 and 12-13. The centrality of these senses will be visualised, however, in the diagrams presented at the end of this chapter (figures 1 and 3-11 on pages 277, 279-287 below).

In section 3, I will discuss how these individual clusters of uses can be grouped into a 'network'. I will discuss the parameters according to which the network will be ordered (9.2.1: the persons to whom *σωφροσύνη* is attributed and the behaviour in which *σωφροσύνη* more clearly manifests itself), and also look into some parameters that would have seemed relevant but were ultimately not decisive for the construction of the network (9.2.2 and 9.2.3: the speakers who attribute *σωφροσύνη* and the physical



symptoms of *ωφροσύνη*). Finally, in this section, I will provide some explanation of how the diagrams and tables in figures 1-11 are to be read (section 3.4).

The previous chapters have, I think, given no reason to reject the assumption, implied by all existing description of the terms, that the adjective *ώφρων*, the noun *ωφροσύνη* and the verb *ωφρονεῖν* etc. can be regarded as belonging to a single lexeme, by which I mean that each of these terms basically expresses one and the same concept, and exhibits essentially the same, very full, range of senses (one apparent exception to the general rule will be noted in the main text below, section 2, sub 1). *ωφρονεῖν* then generally means ‘to be *ώφρων*’ in all the relevant senses of that word, and *ωφροσύνη* is the ‘quality of being *ώφρων*’. Thus I will continue to speak of *ωφροσύνη* while freely including instances of the adjective and the verb and other cognate terms. The somewhat more restricted/specialised use of *ωφρονίζειν* (‘to make *ώφρων*’), *ωφρονιστής* (‘person who makes people *ώφρων*’), *ωφρόνισμα* (a ‘summons to *ωφροσύνη*’), and the adverb *ωφρόνως* (‘in a *ώφρων* manner’) will be discussed briefly in section 4 below.

## 2. *The Uses of ώφρων and Cognates in Plato’s Time: A Synchronic Conspectus*

(1) ‘Soundness of mind’.<sup>1</sup> It is convenient to start with the one group of uses where *ωφροσύνη* means exactly what etymology would seem to suggest: with unimpaired *φρένες* (ζῶς), i.e. ‘with a normal, properly functioning mind’ as opposed to various states of madness and frenzy.

This is how the verb is used when Herodotus tells us that Cambyses *έωφρόνησε* (Hdt. 3.64.5, see chapter 7.2) on recovery from his ‘madness’. As we have seen, Cambyses’ madness was the source of his many crimes to his subjects. Similarly, in *Od.* 23.13, Eurycleia’s ‘madness’ (lack of *αωφροσύνη*) led to her uncharacteristically inconsiderate behaviour vis-à-vis Penelope. In such

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<sup>1</sup> In the descriptions below, Arab numerals represent the ‘nodes’ of the network, clusters of uses of the words that seem to belong together.

cases, then, some of the more overtly moral senses of the word are also secondarily activated, but the terms may also be used simply to describe sanity in contrast to abnormal states of mind that are not necessarily reprehensible, such as the prophetic frenzy of Cassandra (E. *Tr.* 350) or the madness of Orestes when by the Erinyes (E. *Or.* 254) (see chapter 6.2).

For this group of uses, the standard antonyms are *μαίνεσθαι/μανία*, but verbs with the root *-φρον* also occur, notably *χαλιφρονεῖν* (Od. 23.13), and *παραφρονεῖν* (Hdt. 3.35); accordingly, *εὖ φρονεῖν* may occur as an associated term (E. *Ion* 520).

If these uses are semantically quite straightforward, they are by no means very central uses of our terms. It seems significant that this group of uses alone forms an exception to the general rule that our three main terms cover the same range of uses: in our data, we encounter instances of the verb and the noun for this group of uses, but none of the adjective.<sup>2</sup> This may be a coincidence of distribution, but it may well be the case that ‘madness’ and ‘soundness of mind’ are regarded as - more or less temporary - states of mind rather than permanent characteristics of a person. (Even Cambyzes finally recovers.)

In any case, the use of *σωφρονεῖν* and *σωφροσύνη* to describe soundness of mind, would seem relatively rare, and I find no reason to assume that this use is in any sense central to the network. In this connection, it seems relevant to note that this is most probably not a use that has contributed significantly to the high position of *σωφροσύνη* on the scale of Greek values: ‘sanity’ provides the *basis* for morally desirable behaviour, but no more than that (which, in my view, supports the view that one should not assign prototype status to this use).

(2) *Men: avoiding harmful behaviour.* A second, and considerably more frequent, group of uses is formed by those instances in which the terms are applied to a person who wisely refrains from an act that is harmful to himself or those who depend on him. In this sense, as indeed in most others, *σώφρων* and cognates are

<sup>2</sup> In some cases, the participle *σωφρονῶν* is used as a predicative adjective, see e.g. E. *Hel.* 97. One may compare the lack of an adjective proper to *μαίνεσθαι/μανία*, instead of which *μανεῖς/μανιόμενος* can be used.

used to focus not primarily on a person's state of mind as such, but rather on the *behaviour* that is its typical manifestation: behaviour that, in these particular cases, betrays a prudent and responsible concern for one's self-interest. A paraphrase of this use may be something like 'with the soundness of mind to refrain from irresponsible behaviour'. It has been argued above (chapter 1.3) that it probably cannot be maintained that this is a purely 'intellectual' use of the word, and this is borne out by its very first occurrence: In *Il.* 21.462f. (ἐννοσίγαι' οὐκ ἄν με καόφρονα μυσθήσαιο | ἔμμεναι, εἰ δὲ τοί γε βροτῶν ἔνεκα πτολεμίζω, 'Earth-shaker, you could not say that I am καόφρων if, as you suggest, I am to wage war on you for the sake of mortals'), Apollo would seem to suggest that it makes no sense for the gods to fight on behalf of mortals, but in the background there is the idea that it is unseemly to fight with one's uncle, as the narrator's comment on Apollo's words (21.468 αἶδετο γάρ ῥα, 'for he was ashamed') makes clear.

More straightforward is *S. Ph.* 304, οὐκ ἐνθάδ' οἱ πλοῖ τοῖσι cώφροσιν βροτῶν, where Philoctetes explains that sensible men with a sense of responsibility avoid visiting his island because it would be a wasted effort to land on a shore that offers no harbour and no opportunities for trade. In this type of context, cώφρων and cognates often stand in contrast to terms that decry the ill-considered 'rashness' of the opposite line of behaviour, notably ἀνόητος, ἄβουλος, ἄφρων, νήπιος and ἡλίθιος.

Of this 'prudential' sense, we do not find many instances before Sophocles, but it becomes quite frequent after. Indeed, the appeal to this prudential type of cωφροσύνη becomes a cliché of persuasion, and can be made whenever a speaker wishes to prevent further deliberation and commend the line of action that he or she proposes (see especially chapter 5.4, 6.2). Here, there is a specific sub-group of uses, phrases of the type ἄν cωφρονῇτε, 'if you are/will be *sôphrones*', where persuasive value tends to take precedence over semantic content. To this extent, De Vries is justified to speak of an *emploi affaibli*.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps it is because of this relative semantic emptiness that cωφροσύνη does not always take the characteristic form of an inhibition from harmful ac-

<sup>3</sup> De Vries (1944) 99.

tion, but may also turn out to be a spur to action, when a speaker suggests action and hints that it would be harmful *not* to follow his or her advice.

It appears that in the majority of cases, *ωφροσύνη* of this kind is ascribed to free-born adult men, and this is a first pointer to the importance of the various roles connected with gender, age and social status. Apparently, responsibility for oneself and one's affairs is regarded typically as a masculine characteristic, though there are some hints that a woman can show a similarly responsible *ωφροσύνη* by taking good care of the household,<sup>4</sup> and *ωφροσύνη* in this sense is also claimed by some women who show a very 'masculine' sense of responsibility, notably Electra (S. *El.* 365).

(3) *The citizens of a πόλις: observing what is good for the city.* Closely related to this 'prudential' use of *ώφρων* and cognates are those cases where the terms are applied to the male citizens of a πόλις as a collective, notably in speeches before the assembly or in court. Responsibility and self-interest are also decisive factors here, though this is not the self-interest of individual citizens, but of the entire πόλις as a whole. Both in court and in the assembly, speakers will not fail to point out that voting in favour of, or following the advise of, their opponents will harm the community of the πόλις; therefore, if they are 'wise' or 'well-advised', the addressees will vote in favour of the speakers instead.

In court or before the assembly, the appeal to this prudential type of *ωφροσύνη* becomes a cliché of persuasion (see especially chapter 8.4), and it is here that phrases of the type 'ἀν *ωφρονήτε*, you will (not) do *κ'*', are most naturally at home. Again, persuasive value takes precedence over semantic content here, and again, *ωφροσύνη* does not always take the more characteristic form of an inhibition from harmful action, but may also turn out to be a spur to action, when it is suggested that it would be harmful *not* to follow the speaker's advice.

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<sup>4</sup> At X. *Oec.* 7.15, Socrates suggests that good care of the estate is a characteristic of *ώφρονες* both male and female. His female interlocutor, however, clearly has a rather more restricted view of female *ωφροσύνη* ('being quiet and doing basically nothing').

In such cases especially, then, being *κώφρων* typically involves not only avoiding a harmful policy, but at the same time adopting one that is more beneficial. A typical example is a remark taken from Diodotus' speech in favour of reconsidering the aggression against the people of Mytilene advocated by Cleon, Th. 3.44.1, οὐ γὰρ περὶ τῆς ἐκείνων ἀδικίας ἡμῖν ὁ ἀγών, εἰ κωφρονοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας εὐβουλίας ('It is not the *adikia* of the people of Mytilene that is the topic of our present debate, if we are well-advised, but our own good judgement.', see chapter 7.3.1).

If the *κωφροσύνη* of *euboulia* and good council is one way in which *κωφροσύνη* typically relates to the citizens of the πόλις as a collective, the use of *κωφροσύνη* to commend respect for the laws or *εὐνομία* is another. Here, the citizens of a πόλις are not so much presented as an autonomous group of agents with a responsibility for their own welfare, but rather as subjects who would do well to submit to the status quo in order not to undermine the stability of the community. This is, then, a more 'other-regarding' use of *κωφροσύνη*, and it is discussed under number 14 below.

(4) *The πόλις: Good caution in international affairs.* For the πόλις, good management of external affairs is equally important, and here the flexibility of *κωφροσύνη* is especially in evidence when some kind of military intervention is discussed (see chapter 7.3.1). In such cases, *κωφροσύνη* will most often be invoked in order to dissuade the council from rash intervention that may put the πόλις in danger (at Th. 1.84.2, for instance, Sparta's slowness to intervene on behalf of their allies is commended in these terms by Archidamos), but here too, *κωφροσύνη* may on occasion also be invoked to commend intervention for the sake of self-defence, as when the people from Egestae try to persuade the Athenians to fight Syracuse (Th. 6.6.2 κῶφρον δ' εἶναι μετὰ τῶν ὑπολοίπων ἔτι ξυμμάχων ἀντέχειν τοῖς Κυρακοίοις, ἄλλως τε καὶ χρήματα κφῶν παρεξόντων ἐς τὸν πόλεμον ἱκανά, 'It is wise to side with those allies still left and stand your ground against the

Syracusans, especially when they will provide money that is quite sufficient for this war').<sup>5</sup>

(5), (6) *Men: Control of Pleasures and Desires; Moderation (metriotês)*. In this section, I deal with with two groups of uses that seem closely related: 'control of desires' in general, and 'moderation'. This second group of uses seems to be a sub-group to the first: it is closely connected with a specific number of contexts.

If good care of one's self-interest is required from male citizens in the management of their private affairs, and from the πόλις as a whole both in internal and in foreign affairs, individual citizens are of course also required to observe standards of propriety in social interaction. *ᾤωφροσύνη* in men means here that one has the good sense to observe standards of propriety, and takes the guise of 'self-control' or 'control of pleasures and desires'.

One is at some distance here from the 'prudential' senses described above, as 'self-interest' is clearly no longer a decisive criterion, and this is borne out by the fact that in this type of context a rather different set of associated and contrasted terms shows up. Some general terms like *ἀνότητος*, *νήπιος* and *ἄφρων* (but not the more specific *ἄβουλος*) still function as antitheses, but the *ὠφρων* man will also be given the more specific term *κόσμιος*; his counterpart will be said to be *ἀναιδής*, 'lacking in αἰδώς' (a sense of shame and respect for others), *μιαρός* ('filthy'), *πανουργός* ('up to everything'), *θρασύς* ('bold'), *καταπύγων* ('depraved'), or even a *ὑβριστής* ('given to physical infringement on the integrity of others').

This use of our terms is not exactly frequent in works of high literature with an heroic or 'grand' subject matter: in fact, it is absent from Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Herodotus. By contrast, it is very common in authors and genres who have more room to pay attention to the conduct of the non-heroic 'common' citizen, and we find many instances of this type of *ὠφροσύνη* in the *Corpus Theognideum* (Thgn. 483, 497 and 665),

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<sup>5</sup> Thus, notions associated with *ὠφροσύνη* can be exploited to commend policies that are fundamentally opposed. For a similar phenomenon in connection with *ἀνδρεία*, see Roisman (2003).

in Euripides (where the farmer in *Electra* is a very marked example of the type, see E. *El.* 53, 261 and chapter 6.4), in comedy (where the Weaker Logos, Phidippides and the Sausage Seller provide vivid antipodes to the *ώφρων* citizen, see chapter 8.2) and in the orators (e.g. Lys. 3.4, 14.41, 19.16, 21.19, see chapter 8.3).

It is also a sense that is activated without much contextual preparation. Mythical exemplars with a reputation for *ωφροσύνη* such as Peleus (Pi. I. 8.24-6, Ar. *Nu.* 1067) and Proteus (E. *Hel.* 47) are called *ώφρων* without any further explanation. Now of course hearers will be familiar with the traditional stories, and it can perhaps still be argued that they will activate that background knowledge in order to arrive at the right interpretation of *ώφρων*, but even so it still seems quite significant that they apparently need no more than a hint. (An even more striking example is E. *Tr.* 422-3 where *ώφρονος ... γυναικός* is used to name Penelope, who is not mentioned in the context at all. See under 7 below.)

But we also have indications elsewhere that this use is one that is easily activated. An example is Isocrates 3.36, where Nicocles claims *ωφροσύνη* for himself, goes on to provide the motivation that people strongly resent offences against women and boys, only then to explain what *ωφροσύνη* meant for him in practice: as a ruler, he has not touched *any* boy or woman other than his own wife. Evidently, his addressees will have the right interpretation of *ωφροσύνη* readily available if they are to follow his argument. Other examples are provided by discussions of *ωφροσύνη* in Plato: both in *Gorgias* (491D-E) and in *Republic*, it is *this* use of *ωφροσύνη* that is activated when *ωφροσύνη* is introduced into the discussion. By contrast, in *Charmides*, the boy Charmides starts with a definition of *ωφροσύνη* that is typical for *him* as a boy, but before that, *ωφροσύνη* as 'control of desire' has been invoked in the portrayal of Socrates' self-control after an accidental glance inside the boy's himation (155D). Here, this particular notion of *ωφροσύνη* is invoked even *without* the use of the word; and in view of the discussion that follows, there can be no doubt that the readers are to take the scene as a typical example of *ωφροσύνη*.

This, then, is a use both relevant to daily life and evidently easily activated, and there seems to be a strong case to regard this as *the* prototypical use of *ώφρων* in relation to those who are arguably the most central members of Greek society, male citizens.<sup>6</sup> (For my criteria for prototypicality, cf. chapter 1.7 under (4), pp. 33-5.) For those reasons, this is the group of uses that will be placed at the very centre of our representation of the network.

In this use, and most of the uses considered below, *ωφροσύνη* is unequivocally an inhibition, not a spur to action (as we have seen in parts 3 and 4 of this overview, this was less unequivocally the case for 'prudential' *ωφροσύνη*). Still it is important to see that, for a man, *ωφροσύνη* does not normally amount to abstinence of any kind, but rather means that one will be careful not to fulfil one's desires in excessive or improper ways. Thgn. 483 and 497 both mean that even a man who is normally *ώφρων* will no longer be so when drunk, because he will have lost control over his behaviour; it is not suggested that the *ώφρων* man will abstain completely, or even that he will never drink too much. Similarly, the speaker in Lys. 3.4 points out that though his admittedly strong attraction to the boy from Plataea may seem excessive to some of the jury, desire is common and human enough: the test of *ωφροσύνη* lies in the ability to deal with this desire in the most orderly fashion (*κοσμιώτατα*), which in his case amounts to avoiding (or, at any rate, not starting) quarrels and fights with a rival.

A sub-group that seems closely related to this group of uses is the use of *ώφρων* in association with *μέτριος* to mean 'moderate' in one's expenses. This use is met especially in the orators (chapter 8.3), and we can see why it is a good persuasive strategy to draw attention to this type of 'moderation': in such contexts, the

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<sup>6</sup> A further indication is probably that expert definitions of *ωφροσύνη* in philosophical texts often address *only* this use. See, e.g. Antiphon Soph. fr. 16, Pl. *Grg.* 491d-e and cf. the pseudo-Platonic definition, 411e6-8, *ωφροσύνη μετριότης τῆς ψυχῆς περὶ τὰς ἐν αὐτῇ κατὰ φύσιν γιγνομένας ἐπιθυμίας τε καὶ ἡδονάς· εὐαρμοστία καὶ εὐταξία ψυχῆς πρὸς τὰς κατὰ φύσιν ἡδονὰς καὶ λύπας*, 'ωφροσύνη is moderation of the soul with regard to the desires and pleasure that arise in it according to nature, a well-adaptedness and orderliness of the soul concerning the natural desires and pains.'



thought is that fulfilment of one's private desires costs money that cannot be spent on the community of the πόλις, and that extreme expenses may even endanger the preservation of the οἶκος and spoil the chance of future liturgies. We are dealing with a use that is close to the normal, central use of 'control of desire'; the main reason for distinguishing it as an individual group of uses is that its typical associated term, μέτριος, is not found in connection with the mainstream uses of σώφρων in the sense of 'control of desires'. As the use of σώφρων in the sense of 'moderate' embraces aspects of 'self-interest' (preservation of one's estate) as well as of other-regarding morality (serving the interests of the πόλις), its rightful place will be *between* the σώφροσύνη of 'prudence' and the mainstream central uses of 'control of desires'. (Hence, in the schemata, this use gets number 5, the mainstream uses will be found under 6.)

(7) *Women: Marital Fidelity*. For women, standards of propriety are considerably stricter. In our texts, written almost uniformly from a masculine bias, a 'good' woman is one who is a good wife to her κύριος, and a woman will be σώφρων if she avoids any conduct that may harm or offend her husband. (Euripides is a main source here, see chapter 6.3).

First and foremost, the general concern for standards of decent and proper behaviour expected from men has its parallel in the more specific and restrictive rule that a woman will be sexually faithful to her κύριος, and shall not give potential μοῖχοι a chance. Penelope (E. *Tr.* 422-3, Ar. *Th.* 548) is the positive mythological exemplum here - indeed, in *Troades*, Penelope is *identified* by calling her 'a σώφρων woman'. By contrast, Helena and Clytemnestra constitute the negative counter-examples. But this use is not restricted to the mythological figures of high poetry: when the speaker in Lys. 1.10, Euphiletus, says that he was so naïve as to think that his wife was the most σώφρων woman in town (οὕτως ἡλιθίως διεκείμην, ὥστε ὥμην τὴν ἐμαντοῦ γυναῖκα πασῶν σωφρονεστάτην εἶναι τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει), he similarly simply means that he mistakenly thought her faithful.

Here again, we may note (without repeating the complete argumentation under 5, 6 above) that 'fidelity' is a central concern in the case of women, and that the use of σώφρων to signal a

woman's fidelity is, again, very easily activated. Here, it seems, we have *the* prototypical sense where women are concerned.

The thought that fidelity is the core of female ἀρετή is also borne out by the fact that a woman who is σώφρων in this sense is occasionally called ἀρίστη (E. *Hel.* 1684) or ἄμειπτος (E. *IA* 1159) for this very reason, whereas her counterparts will be simply κακή (E. *Hipp.* 667, *And.* 594, *Or.* 1139) or πονηρά (E. *El.* 1099, *Ar. Th.* 549).

(8) *Girls: Chastity.* For unmarried girls, the rule is of course sexual abstinence per se rather than marital fidelity (the old-fashioned English word 'chaste' naturally applies to both, whereas German 'keusch' or Dutch 'kuis' seem to apply more typically to the former only): when Danaus tells his daughters that they should value τὸ σωφρονεῖν more highly than their lives (A. *Supp.* 1013, τὸ σωφρονεῖν τιμῶσα τοῦ βίου πλέον), he means that they should preserve their virginity at all costs.<sup>7</sup>

(9) *Boys: Decency in Dealing with ἐρασταί.* Boys did not, of course, suffer the seclusion to which women and girls were confined, and the standards of decent behaviour that apply to them are rather more complicated and less unequivocal.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, it seems clear that free-born boys were not expected to have any sexual contact with other males at all, let alone to enjoy it. The most notorious offender against σωφροσύνη in this respect, at least as represented by Aeschines) is Timarchus (Aeschines 1 *passim*, see chapter 8.3), who allegedly prostituted himself in his youth. A comically overstated view of the standards of propriety is given in the *agôn* of *Clouds* by the defendant of the 'old education' (Chapter 8.2).

All the same, it can be doubted whether the uses of σωφροσύνη in the sense of 'chastity' for girls, and 'circumspection'/'decency' for boys are quite as central as 'fidelity' for

<sup>7</sup> Total sexual abstinence is also an important element in the σωφροσύνη of Hippolytus in Euripides' play. For him, complete 'chastity' is a condition for ritual purity. But this seems to be a rather idiosyncratic view (see Barrett on E. *Hipp.* 79-81 and Cairns (1993) 314-19).

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, Dover (1978) 23-31, Halperin (1990) 88-104, Winkler (1990) 45-70, Cohen (1991) 171-202.

women, or ‘control of desire’ for men. Our texts are generally not especially lavish in their attention to minors, and when they *are* mentioned, it is quite often from the perspective of adult males: this may have encouraged a one-sided view of girls as beings that are to be strictly secluded and guarded until given away in marriage, and of boys as vulnerable victims to the lusts of ἐρασταί. Yet it can be doubted whether in daily life, children were primarily regarded as embodiments of innocence under severe strain. As we will see below (see 17 below), Charmides names *hêsuchia*, ‘quietness’ as a first definition of *σωφροσύνη*, and when for instance the women in *Lysistrata* claim that all they want is to sit *σωφρόνως ὥσπερ κόρη*, ‘quietly like a girl’ (A. *Lys.* 473f.) without offending anyone, they mean that they will keep quiet.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps, then, the uses of *σώφρων* and cognates to commend ‘quiet’ behaviour are even more central where minors are concerned. In that case there may be no exact correspondence with the uses of our terms with respect to adults. For adults, ‘control of desires’ and ‘fidelity’ seem to be the prototypical uses, but where children are concerned, ‘quiet/obedient’ are perhaps rather more central than ‘chaste’ and ‘decent’. (Incidentally, these uses probably again very much reflect *adult* expectations with regard to desirable juvenile behaviour.) But our data are too scarce to justify any definite conclusions.

(10)-(14) *Quietness And Obedience*. In this group, a number of uses are included that define *σωφροσύνη* in terms of ‘quiet’ behaviour. In case of men, ‘quietness’ means especially inconspicuous behaviour in public life, and avoidance of *πράγματα* such as law courts; in the case of women, children and servants, ‘quietness’ means orderly behaviour and obedient submission to their superiors. Whereas women, children and servants offend their *κύριοι* and infringe on standards of decency somewhat similar in kind to the standards of propriety discussed above, men who are not ‘quiet’ but engage in law suits (e.g.) are frequently also felt to do actual harm to their fellow citizens. Here, ‘quietness’ borders on

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. chapter 8.1, n. 1.

the avoidance of injustice and violence discussed in the fifth and last main group of uses.

(10) *Men: the Quiet Life*. The ideal of the quiet citizen is not very marked in all the genres we have been surveying, but it is important in Aristophanes and the orators. In Aristophanes, the ideal of *ἡσυχία* and *ἀπραγμοσύνη* is most extensively formulated by the Strong Argument in *Clouds* (chapter 8.2), who seems to be a dubious spokesman for essentially serious ideals. Strong extols aristocratic pursuits such as athletics, and abhors the courts and places of gossip such as the bath house and the *agora*. Various antipodes of the quiet citizen occur in Aristophanic comedy, such as the court addict Philocleon in *Wasps*, and the Paphlagonian and the Sausage Seller in *Knights*. Aversion to *πράγματα* also informs the escapist visions of a better city (*Birds*) or a better Athens (*Ra.* 727-9).

In the court speeches of the orators, the notion of quietness and *ἀπραγμοσύνη* is invoked when a speaker wishes to suggest his innocence by claiming that he is inexperienced with the procedures of the courts, and, it will be implied, that he is disinclined to engage in conflict.

Men who do not live up to the ideal of ‘quietness’ but engage in *πράγματα* are often felt actually to harm their fellow citizens; an example from outside the orators is Pentheus (*E. Ba.* 504, 641), who cannot control his anger and threatens to harm the Lydian stranger.

(11), (12) *Women and Girls: keep quiet and obey*. Women are commonly required to ‘keep quiet’ in front of their husbands: they are supposed to refrain from contradicting their men or to interfere with their activities. ‘Do not question me, do not inquire. It is good to be *ώφρων*.’ (*S. Aj.* 586), says Ajax to Tecmessa. Similarly, at *Ar. Lys.* 507-8, the women claim that they used to put up with anything their men would do because of their *ωφροσύνη* (*ἡμεῖς τὸν μὲν πρότερον πόλεμον καὶ χρόνον ἡνεσχόμεθ’ ὑμῶν*) | *ὑπὸ ωφροσύνης τῆς ἡμετέρας τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἅττ’ ἐποιεῖτε...*, ‘during the previous time of this war, we used to bear with anything you men would do because of our *ωφροσύνη*’). Various expressions for *ἡσυχία* and *σιγῇ* are associated terms in this type of context,

and expressions for ‘making trouble’ (λυπεῖν, δυσφορεῖν) act as counterparts.<sup>10</sup>

Injunctions to ‘keep quiet’ are also heard when women show strong emotions such as fear or anger (see especially chapter 4.3) that they would do better to suppress. Notorious examples are the Danaids in *A. Supp.* (198, 710, 724, 992), the Theban women in *A. Th.* 186, Electra (*S. El.* 304) and Medea (*E. Med.* 913). Examples of men unable to control such emotions are encountered less frequently. A very significant exception is Pentheus (*E. Ba.* 504, 641); his fear and anger strongly contrast with the almost uncanny quietness of Dionysus-the Stranger.

Next to ‘marital fidelity’, then, ‘keeping quiet’ is the secondary pillar of female *σωφροσύνη*, and the ideology of fidelity-*cum*-quietness is more or less fully expressed by some of the ‘good’ women in Euripides (Macaria in *Hcld.* 476ff., Andromache in *Tr.* 645ff., see chapter 6.3). In fact, *σωφροσύνη* has been rightly considered the *virtus feminarum* par excellence,<sup>11</sup> and this is hardly because female *σωφροσύνη* embraces every conceivable aspect of admirable behaviour, but rather because conventional ideology allows women few opportunities to exhibit other qualities conventionally classed as *ἀρεταί*, such as *σοφία*, *ἀνδρεία* and so on. It seems that, by and large, men wished their women to be, primarily chaste, silent and generally inconspicuous. That is not to say, of course, that all women conformed to the male ideology, even in our sources. Even in our limited and possibly biased sources, we see women taking on far more active roles, and many of these are not Clytemnestras or Medeas, but rather more estimable figures like Electra and Antigone, and unequivocally good ones like Lysistrata. It seems, however, that the vocabulary to praise women as autonomous agents is rather underdeveloped: the terms of praise that *are* used in such cases, often have a definite ‘masculine’ ring to them, or they are used in ways in which they usually apply only to men.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> On silence, see Rutherford (1996), David (1999).

<sup>11</sup> North (1966) 21.

<sup>12</sup> A striking example of the former is Electra’s speech to Chrysothemis at *S. El.* 967-985, which draws on the notions of *ἐλευθερία*, *εὐκλεία* and even *ἀνδρεία* and *κλέος*. *σωφρονεῖν* etc. can occasionally be used in a rather ‘masculine’ way to apply to women: at *E. Hipp.* 704 for instance, the nurse uses the phrase *οὐκ ἔσωφρόνουσιν ἐγώ* to admit that her plan to approach Hippolytus has not been

The ‘quietness’ of the adult woman has its virtually exact counterpart in that of girls, who are likewise expected to be mainly modest, silent, and obedient; and as we suggested above (under 8), ‘quietness’ may well be an even more central quality for girls in daily life. A good example of the kind is the girl in Euripides’ *Children of Heracles*, who apologises profusely when coming out of the house to offer her life for the sake of her siblings (E. *Held.* 476-7).

(13) *Boys: quietness and ‘shame’*. Boys are likewise expected to behave quietly and obediently, and, as we saw most fully in the case of Charmides (chapter 1.1), this is expected to go with a sense of modesty. The fullest exposition of *σωφροσύνη* as discipline (and decency) in boys is given in the speech on old education by Stronger Argument in *Clouds* (depicting the time ὅτε ... *σωφροσύνη* | ‘*νερόμιστο*, ‘when *σωφροσύνη* was generally practised’, Ar. *Nu.* 962-3, see chapter 8.2). What Stronger Argument gives us here is an exaggerated and one-sided picture, of course, but comparison with the portrayal of Charmides suggests that Aristophanes offers caricature rather than fiction. Charmides himself is notably modest and shameful (inclined to blushing), and it will be no coincidence that the first two definitions of *σωφροσύνη* he offers are ‘doing everything in an orderly fashion and quietly’ (τὸ κοσμίως πάντα πράττειν καὶ ἡσυχῇ, 159b7) and ‘the same as αἰδώς’ (ὅπερ αἰδώς, 160e4). A much earlier instance of youthful *σωφροσύνη* is Telemachus in *Od.* 4.158 (chapter 2.2), who shies away from addressing Menelaus before his turn.

As we argued above, *Charmides* seems to indicate that for boys, ‘quiet’ and ‘orderly’ behaviour was very much a central norm and a central interpretation of *σωφροσύνη*. Here, we seem to have yet another prototypical use.

If *σωφροσύνη* is sometimes regarded as the special virtue of youth, the reason for this once again seems to be - as in the case of women - that boys were not yet expected to exhibit the full range of adult masculine ἀρεταί, whereas the quiet, obedient and decent behaviour associated with *σωφροσύνη* were highly valued

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successful: it was a piece of ‘bad thinking’. On women’s ἀνδρεία, cf. Hobbs (2000).

for their age category. A clear case in point is Isocrates' praise of Euagoras (9.22-23), who is said to have had beauty, strength and *σωφροσύνη* in his youth, and, in addition to the matured versions of these qualities, *ἀνδρεία*, *σοφία* and *δικαιοσύνη* in adulthood (9.23 *ἀνδρὶ δὲ γενομένῳ ταῦτά τε πάντα συνηυξήθη καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἀνδρεία προσεγένετο καὶ σοφία καὶ δικαιοσύνη*).

At the same time, not all boys live up to the ideal, and one often hears complaints that young people typically lack *σωφροσύνη* (e.g. S. fr. 786, Democritus fr. 294, X. *Mem.* 1.2.26, Arist. *Rhet.* 1390b), which means that they do not yet fully master their passions and desires or have the prudent consideration associated with adulthood. Here we seem to have the stereotypical idea that 'good sense' only comes with age.

(14) *Subordinates: Do not resist.* Finally, for subjects vis-à-vis their superiors, *σωφροσύνη* again amounts to obedience and the good sense not to speak up against those in power. This 'authoritarian' view of *σωφροσύνη* is characteristically rare in our literary texts, which are of course dominated by the discourse of free males of high status. The most significant instances occur when 'free' men are treated like 'slaves'; in such cases there is a strong sense of insult. Thus, this view of *σωφροσύνη* is expressed by some notoriously despotic characters in tragedy, notably Klytaimnestra and Aegisthus in *Agamemnon* (1425, 1620, 1664, all spoken to the chorus of elderly citizens, see chapter 4.4) and Menelaus and Agamemnon in *Ajax* (1075, 1259; Ajax sarcastically adopts their view at 677, see chapter 5.2).

(15), (16) *Men: Avoiding Injustice and Violence.* Whereas the man who is *σώφρων* in the sense of 'in control of his desires' is willing and able to comply with standards of decency, *σωφροσύνη* can also be used to commend the willingness to avoid acts that violate the rights of his fellow men, rights that under normal conditions are protected by the *νόμοι*. *σώφρων* is close to *δίκαιος* here, and *ἀδικεῖν*, *ἀμαρτάνειν* and *ὕβριζεν* will often be used as antonyms of *σωφρονεῖν* in this sense. Thus, 'σώφρων and δίκαιος' becomes almost a standard combination in court, where people will plead innocent of the charge at hand, and support this by

pointing out that they are generally ‘decent’ fellows (Chapter 8.3). A straightforward example of the close association of the two is provided by Lys. 1.38, where the defendant claims that if he had lured Eratosthenes into his house in order to kill him on the basis of mere rumours, this would have been an injustice (*ἡδίκουν ἄν*), whereas if he had done so on the basis of very real and repeated facts, he would not consider this an infringement on the spirit of the law, but would (still) consider himself *κώφρων* (*κώφρον’ ἂν ἐμαυτὸν ἡγούμην*).

The use of *κωφροσύνη* in the sense of ‘respect for the rights of others’ is prominent in poems from the Theognidean corpus (chapter 3.2), poems that reflect the distressing view that in a changing society, some (new) ways of acquiring property openly disregard the claims of others but are not (yet) sufficiently precluded by a universally accepted code (Thgn. 41, 379, 431, 437, 454, 701, 754, 756, 1082a). In these poems, *κώφρονες* are those who refrain from *ἀδίκητα*, even if, as it seems, they would have every opportunity to practise it.

Physical violence is, of course, a specific category of injustice (the speaker in Lys. 1.38 has to go to some lengths to argue that in his case, this does not apply), and there is an important subgroup here where *κώφρων* etc. are used to commend those who refrain from such physical violence.

(17) *Men: do not offend the gods.* The last two groups of uses concerned violence and injustice against one’s fellow men; this category deals with acts that infringe on the rights of the gods. In high literature from the late archaic and early classical periods, human beings are frequently said to offend the gods. This they do either by directly insulting them (Ajax in Sophocles, see chapter 5.2) or actually ‘fighting’ them (Pentheus in *Bacchae*, see chapter 6.6), or, more typically perhaps, by violating human relationships that are specifically under divine protection. This second category includes violence against one’s own kin and one’s own country (of which the *Oresteia*, the *Electras* and the plays dealing with the expedition of the Seven Against Thebes are the main examples), and also violence against suppliants (Aeschylus’ *Supplikes*, Sophocles’ *Oedipus at Colonus* and the suppliant dramas of Euripides) and *xenoi* (*Cyclops*). In such cases, a condemnation



of human violence is often backed up on a 'vertical' level by the thought that such deeds of aggression offend the gods. In such contexts, *νώφρων* applies to the man who has the good sense to avoid offending the gods (offences which are typically characterised in terms of *ἀέβεια* and *ὑβρις*), and this particular brand of *σωφροσύνη* regularly goes with a kind of 'modesty' that results from awareness of the limitations of human nature. The fullest exposition of the thoughts connected with this use of *νώφρων* etc. is in the prologue of Sophocles' *Ajax*, where Athena warns Odysseus not to follow the example of Ajax (who had claimed, as becomes clear later on in the play, that he could win his battles without Athena's help):

τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν ὑπέρκοπον  
 μηδέν ποτ' εἵπηις αὐτὸς εἰς θεοὺς ἔπος  
 μηδ' ὄγκον ἄρηι μηδέν', εἴ τινος πλέον  
 ἢ χειρὶ βρίθεις ἢ μακροῦ πλούτου βάθει.  
 ὥς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε κανάγει πάλιν  
 ἅπαντα τὰνθρώπεια· τοὺς δὲ νόφρονας  
 θεοὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ στυγοῦσι τοὺς κακοὺς.  
 (S. *Aj.* 127-133)

In view of this, you must never yourself speak a word of arrogance against the gods, nor assume any kind of swollen pride, if you pull more weight than another man either by your deeds or by the depth of great wealth. See how a day brings down and brings back up again all human affairs; those who show good sense win loyalty from the gods, but they detest those who are bad.

Passages such as this are universally regarded as highly significant for the history of Greek thought, as of course they are, and accordingly, this religious 'humility' or 'self-awareness' is widely seen as an equally significant element in the concept of *σωφροσύνη*. It undoubtedly is, yet it should not be forgotten that the use of *νώφρων* etc. in direct connection with this type of religious thinking is largely restricted to the high poetry of Pindar and the tragedians. Mythological atrocities like the expedition of the seven warriors against Thebes, the killings in the house of Atreus, or the various deeds of aggression by non-Athenians in the suppliant dramas are condemned not just on the basis of their inhumanity, but also on the ground that such deeds offend the gods. By contrast, in the discourse of the court in the ordi-

nary πόλις, violence is more usually condemned in purely legalistic terms, and this condemnation is rarely backed up by an appeal to religion. In such contexts, the expression ‘to be *κώφρων* concerning the gods’ is used mostly on a more mundane level to mean that one should avoid the juridical offence of *ἀσέβεια* (Xenophon’s discussion of the trial of Socrates in *Mem.* 1 offers the prime example here; the expression *κωφρονεῖν περὶ θεού* occurs in 1.1.20); in such passages, associations from Pindar and tragedy do not seem present to a very significant extent.<sup>13</sup>

It would seem, then, that here we have one of the more peripheral uses of *κωφροσύνη*: *κωφροσύνη* as conceived in religious terms is largely confined to specific genres of literature, and almost invariably directly connected with specific, almost larger-than-life, crimes and offences.

(18) *Εὐνομία*. In internal politics, *κωφροσύνη* understood as responsibility for one’s πόλις may be especially associated with avoidance of strife and concern for stability and order (Ba. 13.186 for instances commends *Εὐνομία καὶ κώφρων*, see chapter 3.2). In such contexts, *κωφροσύνη* is the quiet obedience of the law-abiding citizen, who wisely refrains from the ‘injustice’ of civil strife.

As can be expected, this use of the term easily lends itself for the formation of political slogans: in the aftermath of the Sicilian expedition (and again in the time around 404), *κωφρόνως πολιτεύεσθαι* (Th. 8.53.3) is, in Athens, the slogan of those in favour of a moderate oligarchy in the Spartan manner (see chapter 7.3.3). Here again, *κωφροσύνη* is more akin to caution than to a more assertive line of action, for the virtue of this policy is mainly that it avoids the allegedly rash and ill-considered decisions of the democratic assembly.

<sup>13</sup> The thought expounded in Pl. *Lg.* 716d, that the *κώφρων* man wins the loyalty of the gods because he is similar to them (*φίλος, ὅμοιος γάρ*), influential in later philosophy and early Christian writers, is a different conception altogether.

### 3. *Turning Our Data into a 'Network': Parameters and Some Legenda*

In the diagrams that follow the present section, a visualisation will be offered of the network by which the various uses discussed above are connected. Figures 1 & 2 offer a full conspectus of the uses of our terms that must have been familiar to Plato; figures 3-11 offer representations of the uses of our terms in individual authors or genres.

In the present section, I will briefly discuss the main criteria according to which I have ordered my data (especially *who* is called *ώφρων* and *how* he/she behaves); and also some criteria that would seem potentially relevant but did not turn out to be decisive for the construction of the network (*who* insists on *ωφροσύνη*?, physical signs of *ωφροσύνη*).

This will then be followed by some words on how my diagrams are to be read. Specifically, the diagrams in figures 1 and 3-11 aim to visualise the various surface uses of our terms and their comparative centrality or decentrality; the schema in figure 2 shows how groups of surface uses may be subsumed under abstract schemata.

#### 3.1. *The central parameters: Who is ώφρων and what are the manifestations of ωφροσύνη?*

Figure 1 offers a conspectus of the network by which the uses of *ώφρων* and cognates familiar at the time of Plato are connected. In this network, the vertical axis represents the various *types* of behaviour in which *ωφροσύνη* manifests itself. At the top, we have the use of *ωφρονεῖν/ωφροσύνη* to indicate a sound state of mind *tout court*, next, we find the 'prudential' use, in which *ωφροσύνη* is primarily beneficial to the agent himself. Further down are those uses where *ωφροσύνη* increasingly affects others than the agent himself: roughly in the middle, we find the uses of *ώφρων* and cognates where *ωφροσύνη* helps one avoid offences against social norms of behaviour (among these groups are what I take to be the most central uses of our terms); at the bottom of the schema, we find those uses where *ωφροσύνη* helps to avoid actually doing harm to others.

On the horizontal axis, we find the various social groups to whom *σωφροσύνη* is typically ascribed. In the centre of this axis, we find men, both individually and in the collective of the *πόλις*. It would probably be uncontroversial to say that men were the dominant part of the population in classical Greek society (at least as represented in our sources), and on account of this male dominance, we are justified in placing those uses of *σωφροσύνη* that relate most typically to males in the centre of our system. On both sides of the axis, there are those groups who are a more marginal presence in society, at least from the point of view of our texts, which are of course largely the work of adult male authors. (In my corpus, all texts are by male authors; in the fragments of Sappho, our terms do not occur.) Apart from the *σωφροσύνη* of adult males, *σωφροσύνη* is most intensely discussed with respect to women, and to a lesser degree boys. Girls on the one hand, and servants/subjects on the other hand are, where the attribution of *σωφροσύνη* is concerned, relatively the most marginal categories in society.

So my claim is that that for the interpretation of any use of *σώφρων* and cognates, the two most pertinent questions to ask are: (i) *Who* is called *σώφρων*? (Which type of person from which segment of society?) and (ii) *Which kind of behaviour* is the manifestation of this *σωφροσύνη* and who is affected by it, and benefits from it? I think the analysis of my data has shown that the answers to these two questions can provide one with sufficient data to classify each individual instance of the terms.

### 3.2. *Individual Perspectives: Which Speakers Insist on σωφροσύνη?*

If the above are the main parameters according to which I have ordered my data, I have found little reason to make a systematic distinction between various groups of speakers who *use* *σωφροσύνη*, and who insist that others live up to the values that the uses of our terms represent. The reason why I have found no reason to do so in a systematic manner is, I think, that basically *all* uses of the terms to some extent represent a masculine bias. This is especially clear where the *σωφροσύνη* of other groups is concerned: it is undoubtedly the adult *males* who like their women loyal and obedient, their daughters chaste and incon-

spicuous, their sons orderly and their servants obedient, and there is no sign at all - at least in our sources - that the non-dominant groups of society have anything like a parallel set of values of their own.

What is quite normal, of course, is that speakers disagree on whether a particular type of behaviour is indeed an indication of *σωφροσύνη*, or that they use the term for what seem to be entirely different interpretations. The conflicting interpretations of *σωφροσύνη* in some of Euripides' plays are particularly good examples in this respect. What happens in these cases is that speakers draw on different parts of the network: they activate different uses of the terms and perhaps ignore others, and insist that *their* particular interpretation is singularly relevant to the situation at hand. But mostly, speakers seem to select individual uses from roughly the same larger set of uses; I have not encountered examples where one has to assume that speakers draw on entirely unrelated concepts that are necessarily strange to their addressees, so that communication is doomed to fail altogether.

What also happens quite often, is that women (and to a far lesser degree, members of other non-dominant groups) take a more active and dominant role than conventional morality would require. These women in a way appropriate the masculine role, and claim merits for themselves that normally belong exclusively to the domain of men. Notorious examples are Aeschylus' Clytemnestra, Sophocles' Electra and Euripides' Medea, but also - a more positive example perhaps, Aristophanes' Lysistrata. In such cases, these women adopt the 'masculine' rhetoric of *σωφροσύνη*, and the passages in which they do so will always be striking and rhetorically 'charged'. But these cases remain comparatively rare, and there seems to be insufficient ground to make them a decisive factor for my system of categorisation.

### 3.3. *Physical Manifestations of σωφροσύνη*

As we have seen above, *σωφροσύνη* typically, in fact, almost invariably manifests itself in social interaction. By contrast, there are surprisingly few passages in which attention is drawn to the physical *symptoms* of *σωφροσύνη*. This will largely be due to the

fact that *σωφροσύνη* typically manifests itself in *controlled* responses (or the mentality that enables one to exert control) rather than spontaneous ones, and that the exertion of control more often than not means the *repression* of undesirable types of social interaction rather than the manifestation of desirable types.

Sometimes, the loss or absence of control is physically visible. This is the case with persons who lose their normal state of mind, and get into a state of frenzy, such as Cassandra (E. *Tr.* 348-50), or Orestes when haunted by the furies (E. *Or.* 254). Loss of control also shows with drunkards, and Theognis 479-84 names some of the symptoms (notably loss of control of speech). Loss of control also shows when people cannot suppress fear or anger and thus fail to keep quiet. Many women in distressful situations show these symptoms, notable examples are provided by the Danaids in A. *Supp.* (198, 710, 724, 992), the Theban women in A. *Th.* 186, Electra (S. *El.* 304) and Medea (E. *Med.* 913).

Physically visual symptoms that betray the *presence* of *σωφροσύνη* are comparatively rare, and mostly confined to the realm of 'quiet' behaviour. Thus, for women and girls, manifestations of *σωφροσύνη* are that they stay in the house and keep quiet (e.g. E. *Hcld.* 476-7, cf. Ar. *Lys.* 473 sitting *σωφρόνως* ('quietly') like a girl). We are somewhat better informed where boys are concerned. Charmides speaks of 'doing everything in a quiet manner' (Pl. *Chrm.* 159B) and names walking in the streets and talking as examples. The boys of Stronger Logos' good old days are similarly disciplined (Ar. *Nu.* 963-4), and their *σωφροσύνη* is also visible in that they avoid to provide potential *ἐρασταί* with any sexual *stimuli*: thus, they hide their genitals (*ibid.* 973), and avoid seductive glances at men (*ibid.* 979-80). The result of their generally austere lifestyle ultimately shows in that they acquire an athletic body with a healthy complexion (*ibid.* 1009-14).

Charmides also shows his 'modesty' when blushing after being praised by Critias. This is a rare *spontaneous* physical symptom of *σωφροσύνη* and perhaps it is significant that Socrates relates the symptom to 'his liability to feel shame' (τὸ αἰσχυντηλὸν αὐτοῦ,

158C6) and therewith arguably more directly to the ‘emotion-like’ αἰδώς than to the controlled response of σωφροσύνη.<sup>14</sup>

Physically visual manifestations of σωφροσύνη in adult men are again more rarely mentioned. Aeschines (1.25) mentions the orators of the good old days, notably Solon, who according to him refrained from wild gesticulation. The speaker in D. 45, Phormio, contrasts the quiet gait and stern expression of his adversary (D. 45.68) with his own habits of talking loud and walking fast (*ibid.* 78), but claims that such outward appearances are downright misleading if taken as symptoms of σωφροσύνη and the lack of it: for all his quietude, Phormio has allegedly been all but *νώφρων* in the pursuit of his own pleasures. Thus, the speaker here contrasts the outward appearances that manifest the σωφροσύνη of ‘quietude’ to the not-directly-visible σωφροσύνη of control of desires. He leaves no doubt that for him, the latter is the real thing, while the physically visible manifestations are potentially deceptive.

#### 3.4. *The Connections between the Groups of Uses: The Synchronic Conspectus and Individual Authors; the Abstract Schemata*

In the diagrams that follow, the circles representing groups of uses are connected by lines that indicate a close connection between groups of uses that show a marked family resemblance. The similarity usually consists either in a similarity of *effect* (comparable types of behaviour), or in a similarity of *agent* (different types of behaviour exhibited by persons from the same social category).

This is not in any way to say that these lines are the *only* connections between groups of uses that can be drawn. In particular, we have seen how in some cases more than one use of our terms is activated, and these frequently concern what would seem to be relatively distant relatives in the network. (The four Homeric instances discussed in chapter 2.2 provide some good examples.) It is quite impossible to represent all these connections in a single diagram on a two-dimensional sheet of paper. (In some respects, it might be helpful to adopt a *three-dimensional* model in-

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Cairns (1993) 373n.87.

stead of a two-dimensional one, a 'molecule', say, rather than a 'network'.) A single two-dimensional representation will necessarily be selective. Therefore, to counter the impression of arbitrariness that might arise, I have chosen to represent, in figures 3-11, schemata for the uses and connections between uses as they occur in individual authors or genres. (The diagram in Figure 1 is essentially a compacted summary of these subsidiary diagrams, summarising which uses must have been familiar at the time of Plato.)

In figure 1, I have marked what I take to be the prototypical uses by means of a grey background. In figures 3-11, I use this background with a different function: to highlight which uses are activated in any particular author or genre. It will be seen in these diagrams, that the prototypical uses of the terms are quite common in Euripides, Aristophanes and the orators, and less so in Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Herodotus and Thucydides. It seems reasonable to suggest that where the use of *σώφρων* and cognates is concerned, Euripides, Aristophanes, and the orators (and Plato, as we will see in chapter 10) are probably to be bracketed as conforming rather more closely to ordinary language use.

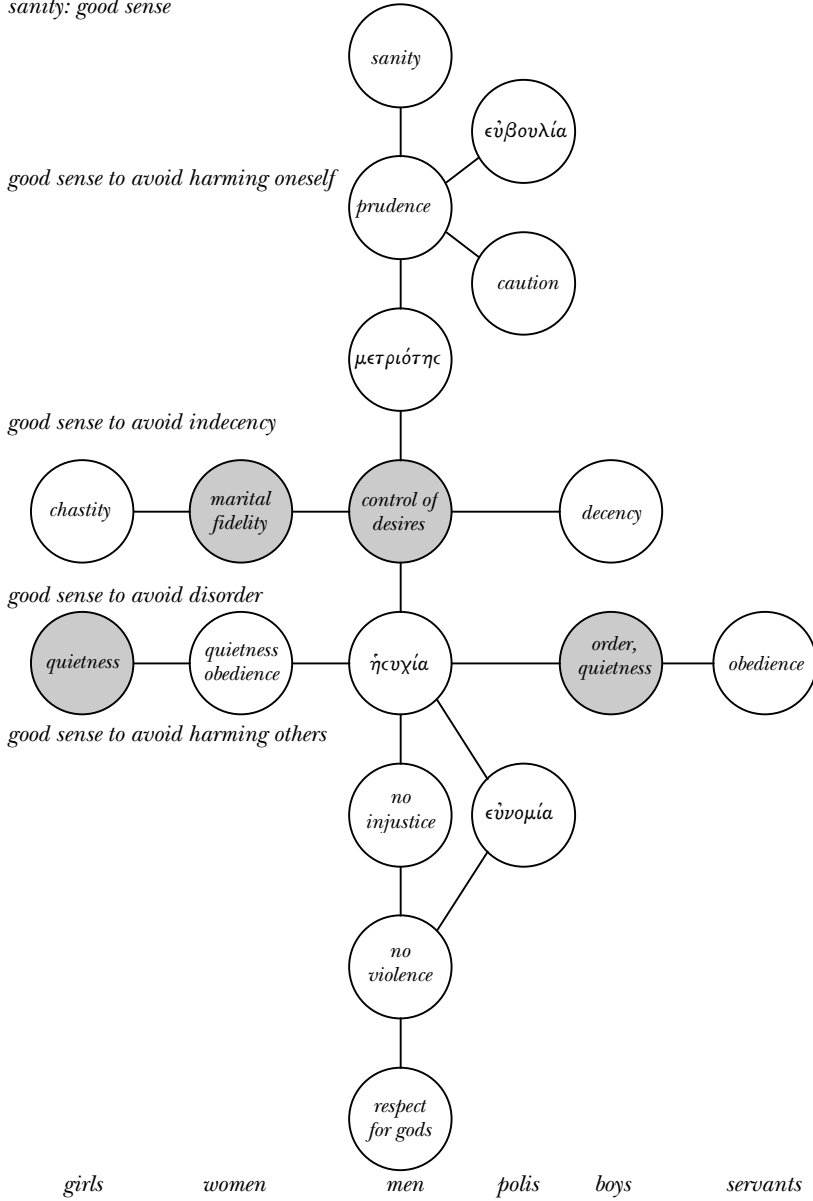
Whereas diagrams 1 and 3-11 aim to give an easy conspectus of the network, and to visualise the relative centrality (prototypicality) or marginality of uses, the aim of the table in figure 2 is rather different. This aims to show how various groups of uses can be subsumed under abstract schemata that define the salient characteristics that they share. Here, at the lower end of the table, the various groups of uses that we have identified are represented. The identification of a group of uses is in itself a process of abstraction from a (large) number of rather similar individual uses: in this sense, the various groups of uses are schemata at a low level of abstraction. These groups are then, on the middle level, subsumed under schemata at a higher level of abstraction, that show the family resemblance between a number of groups of uses. At the top level, a very high degree of abstraction is reached, and a characteristic is defined that is probably shared by all uses of our terms, that of being 'of sound mind'. In accordance with its high level of abstraction, this characteristic is neat



and clear, but undoubtedly under-descriptive for most groups of uses, save those in group 1 ('sanity').

So the two diagrams of figures 1 and 2 are designed to complement rather than replace each other: they intend to visualise different aspects of the complex category that the uses of *νώφρων* and cognates constitute. Roughly speaking, Figure 1 represents the inner constitution of the network, figure 2 the abstractions that can be made to explain the various types of resemblance between the network's constituent parts.

Fig. 1. σωφροσύνη and cognates: the network

*sanity: good sense*

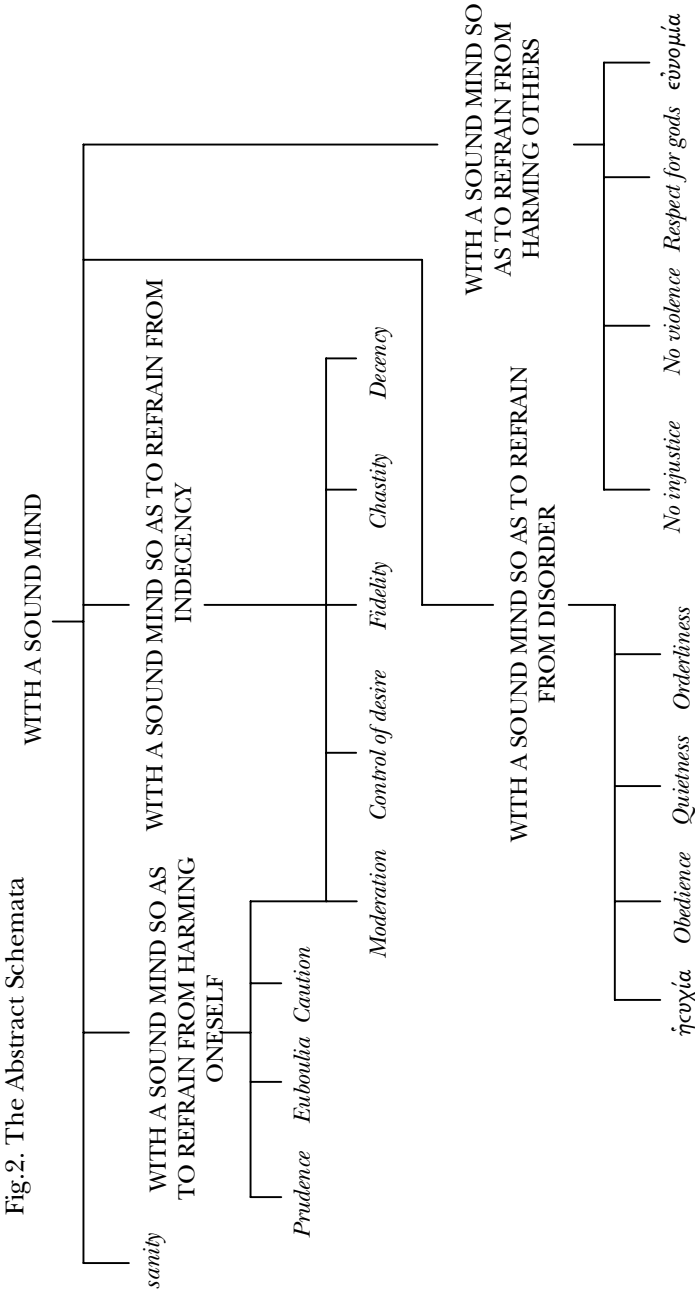


Fig. 3. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Homer

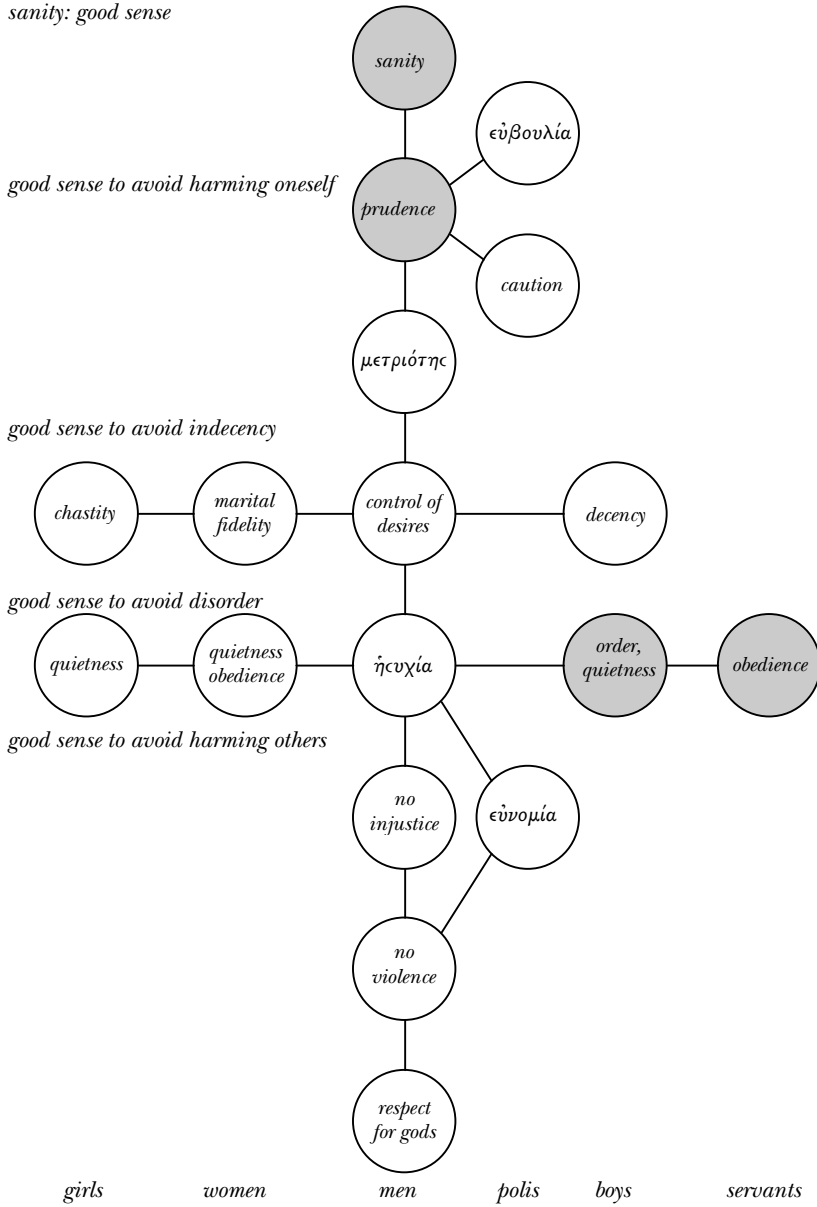
*sanity: good sense*

Fig. 4. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Archaic Poetry

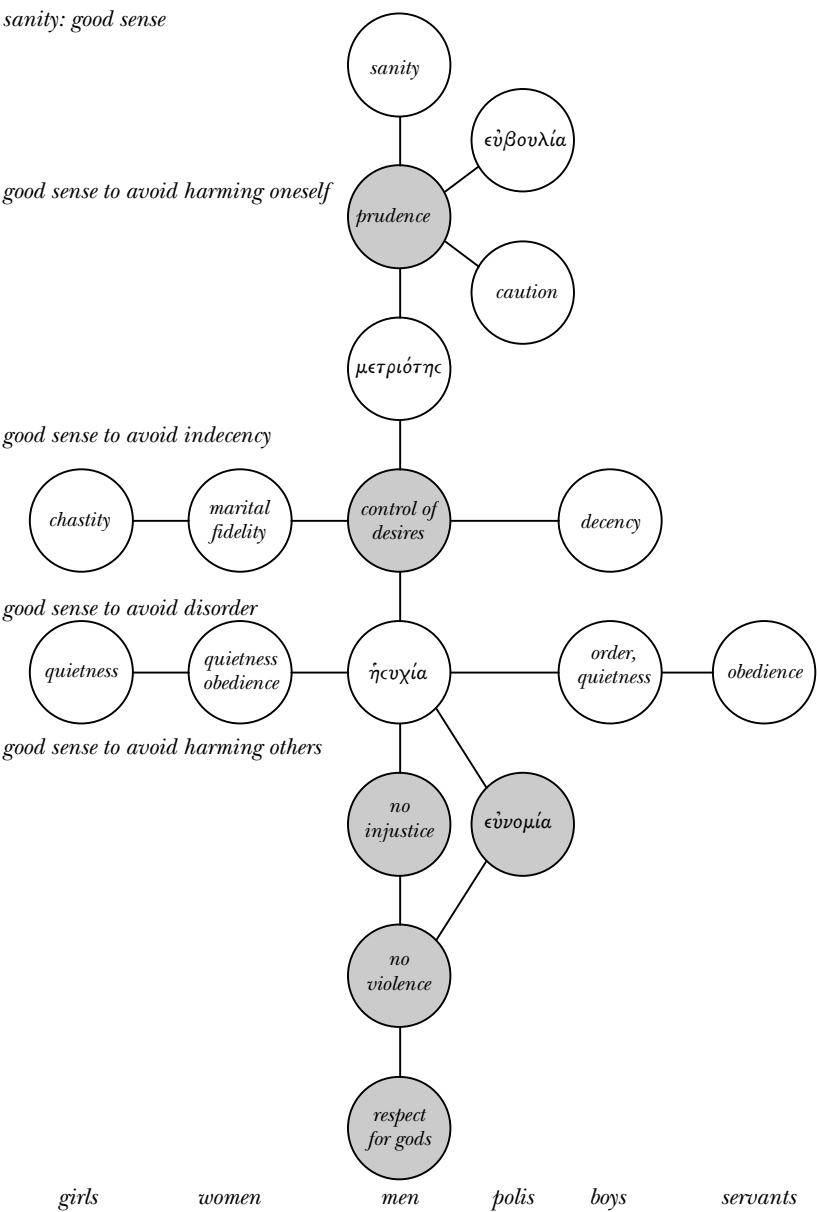


Fig. 5. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Aeschylus

*sanity: good sense*

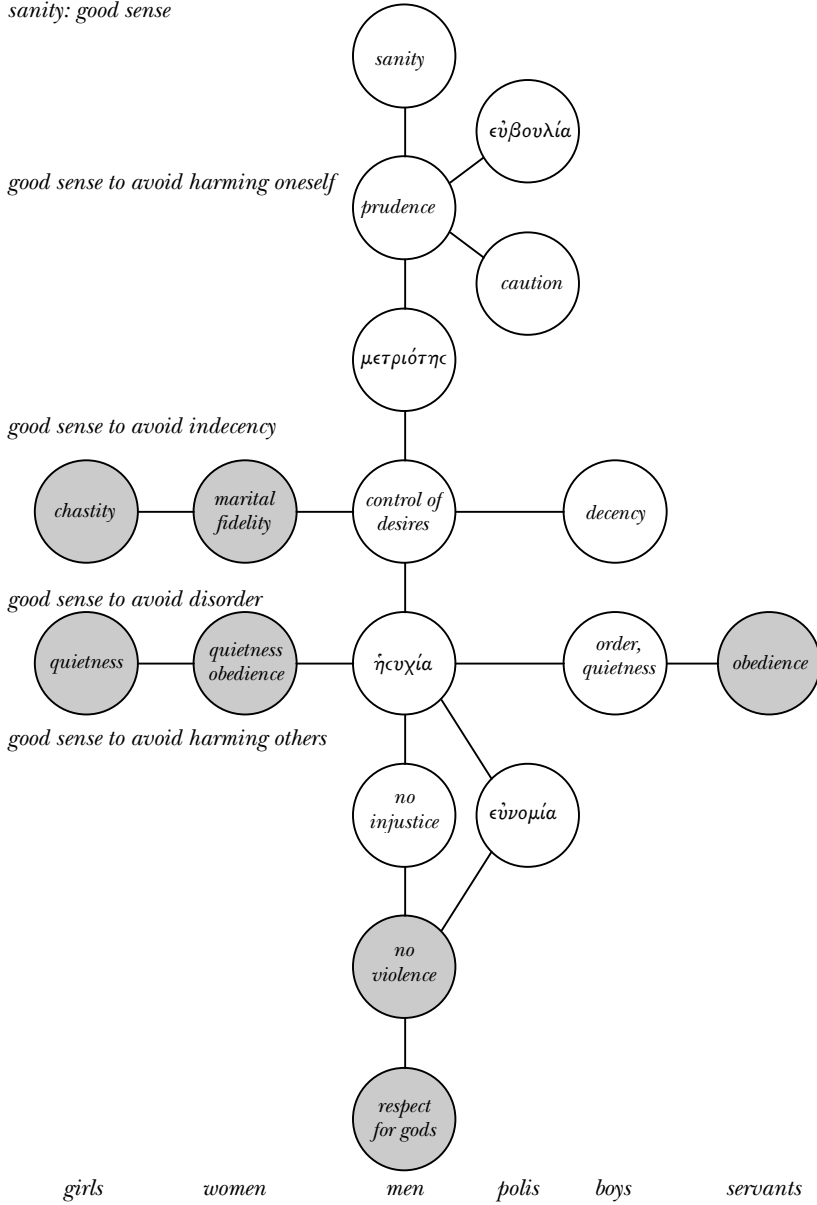


Fig. 6. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Sophocles

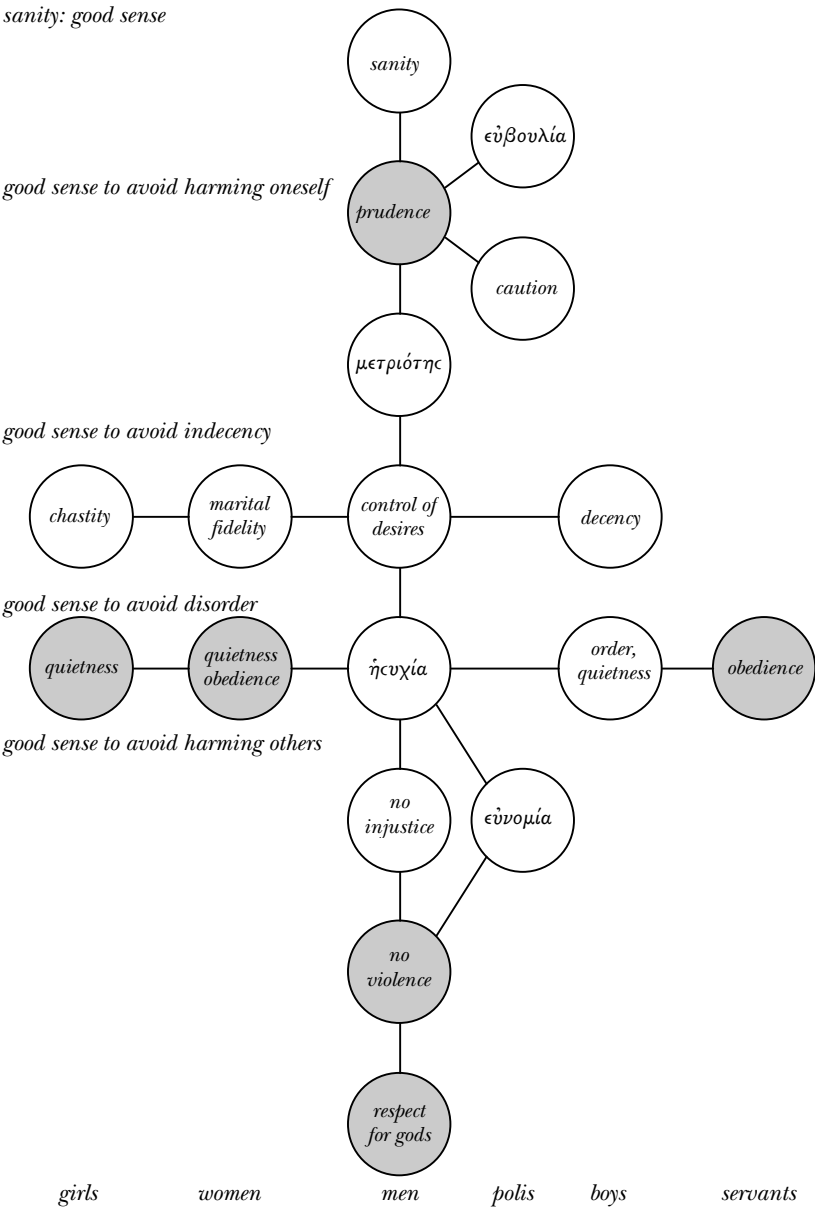


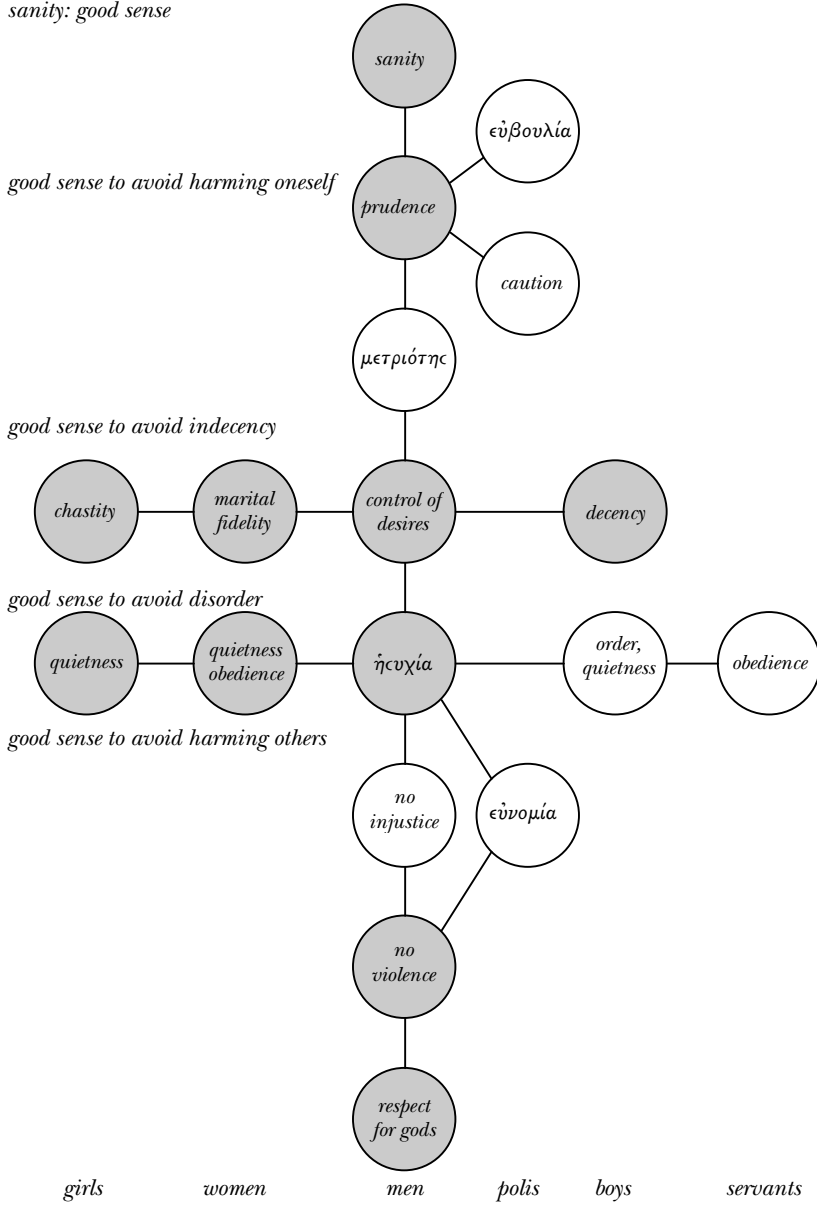
Fig. 7. *σωφροσύνη* and cognates: Euripides*sanity: good sense*



Fig. 8. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Herodotus

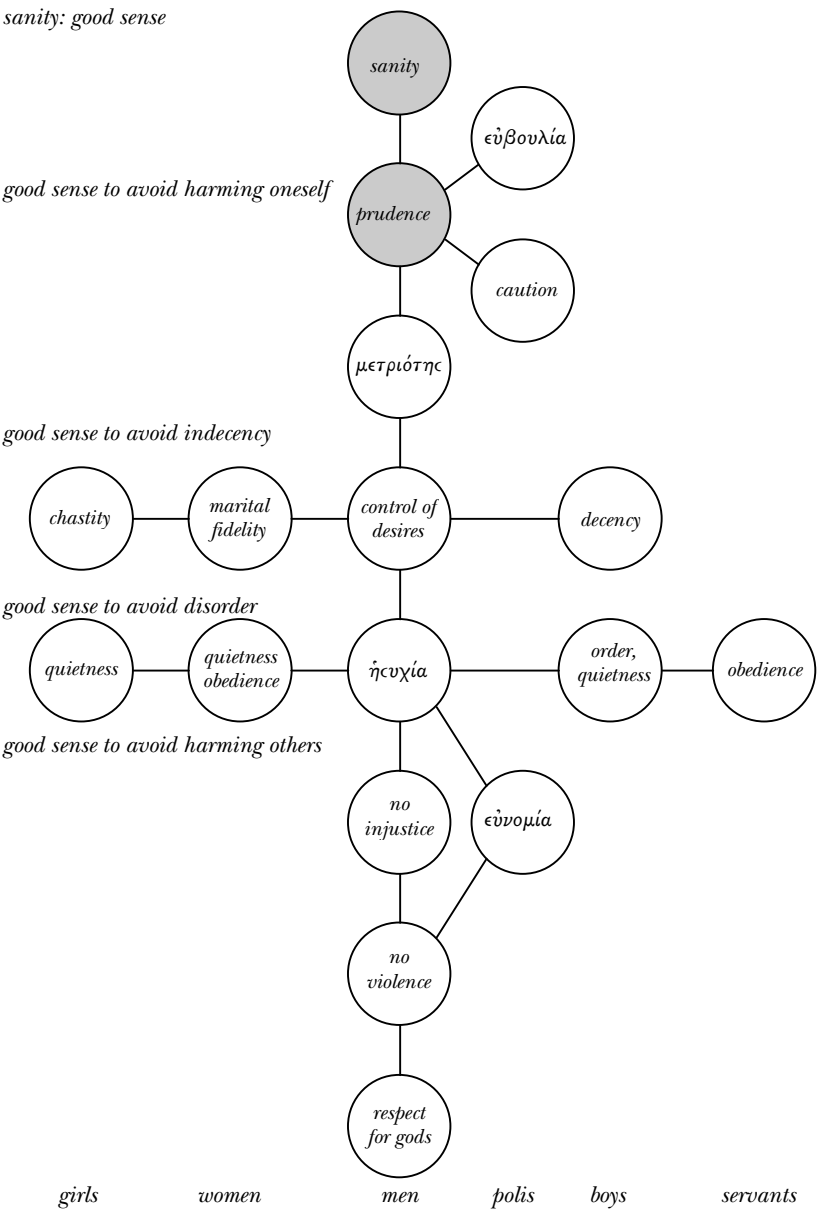


Fig. 9. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Thucydides

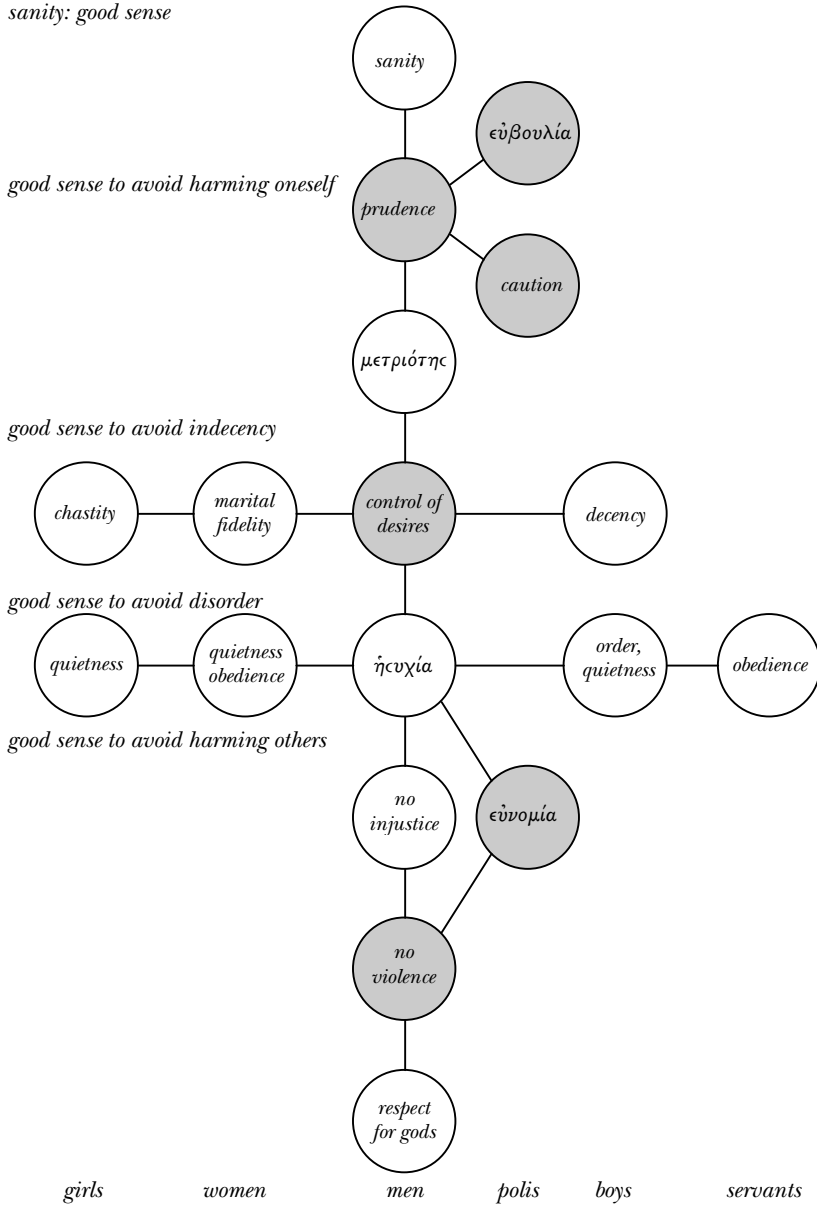
*sanity: good sense*

Fig. 10. *σωφροσύνη* and cognates: Aristophanes

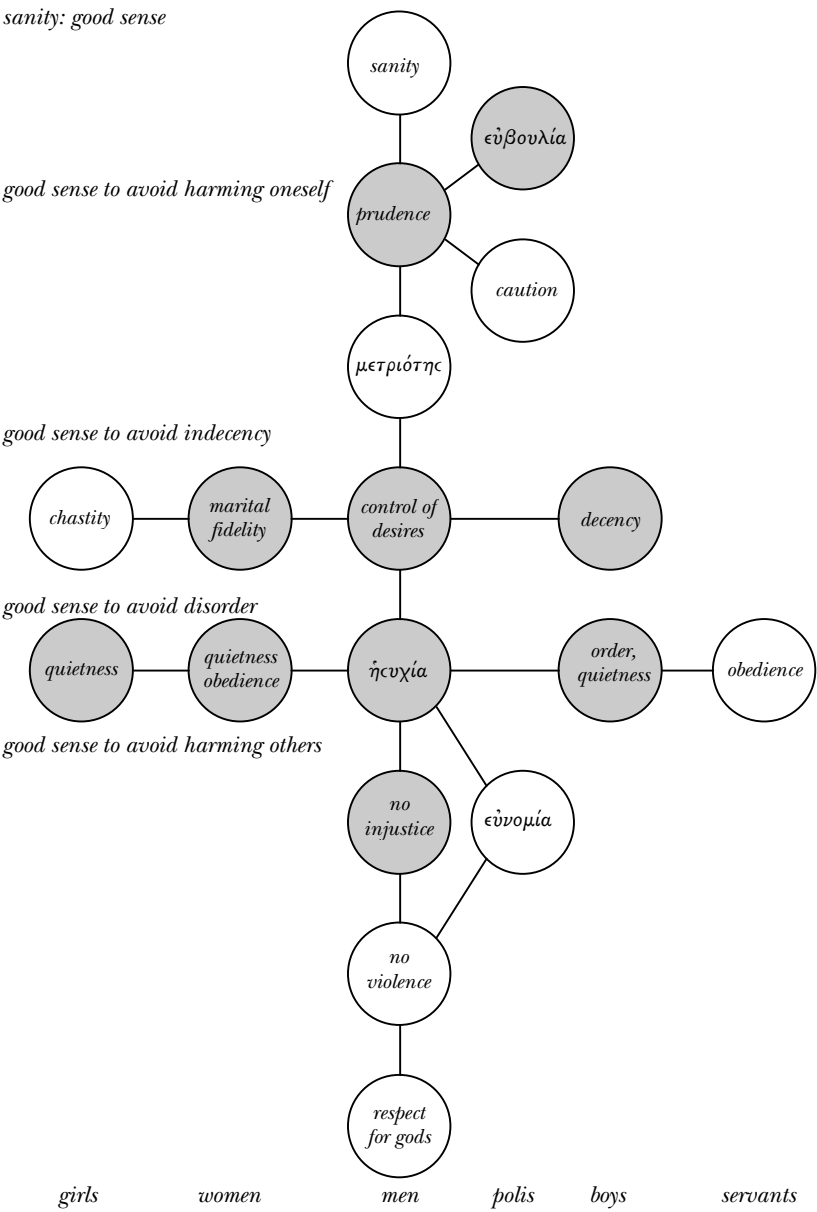
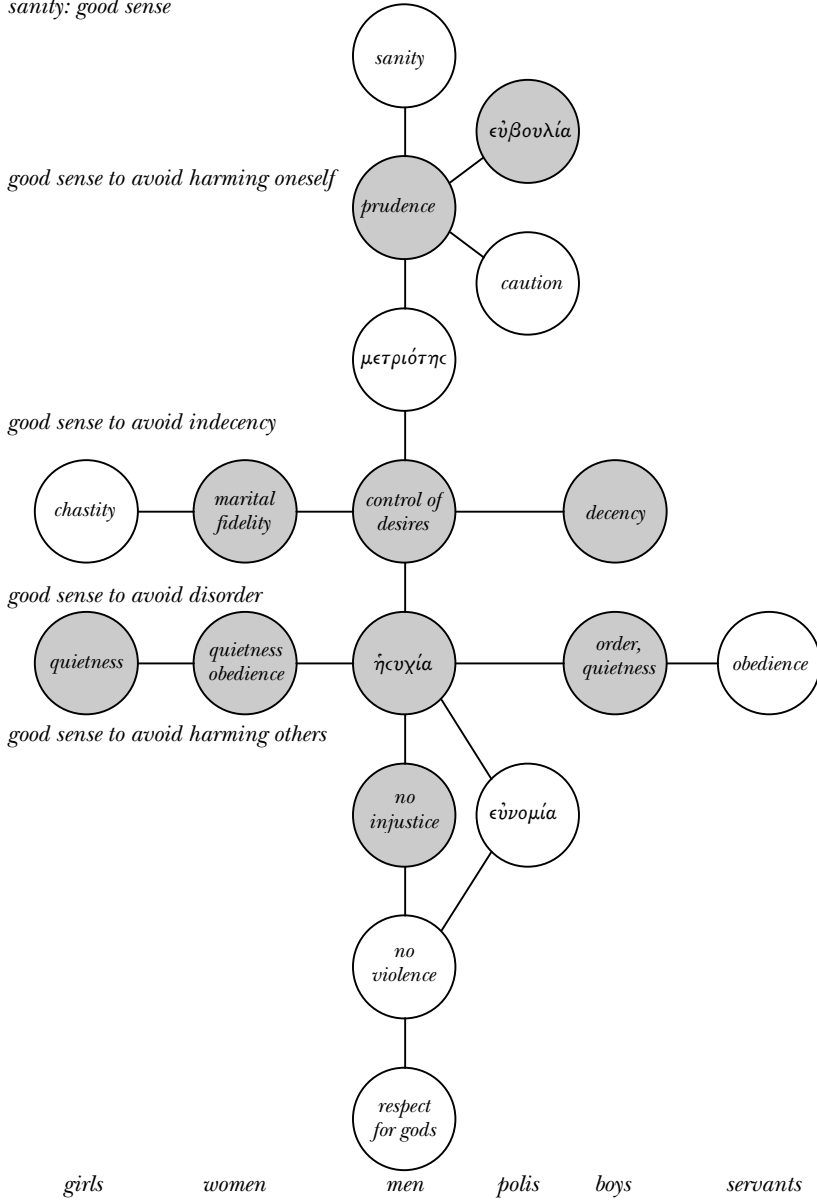


Fig. 11. σωφροσύνη and cognates: Orators

*sanity: good sense*



#### 4. *The Specialised/Restricted Use of Some Cognate Terms:*

A note on *σωφρόνως*, *σωφρονίζειν*, *σωφρονιστής* and *σωφρόνισμα*

As I have argued above, *σώφρων*, *σωφρονεῖν* and *σωφροσύνη* in principle cover the whole range of uses that I have identified in the network described above, one notable exception being that *σώφρων* is not used to indicate a ‘sound state of mind’ *tout court*.

Some cognate terms, notably the adverb *σωφρόνως* and the derivatives *σωφρονίζειν*/*σωφρόνισμα*/*σωφρονιστής* seem rather more restricted in their uses within our corpus. These terms will be briefly discussed below.

(1) *σωφρόνως*. The adverb *σωφρόνως* would of course mean ‘in a *σώφρων* manner’ and may be expected to be used in all the ways in which the adjective is used (uses 2-18). This is indeed the case. But what is peculiar is that outside tragedy, the use of the adverb generally seems relatively restricted and more ‘standardised’ than that of the adjective. Outside tragedy, the instances of *σωφρόνως* in my corpus mostly mean either ‘prudently’ (drawing on uses 2-3) or ‘decently, soberly, in a way that betrays control of desires’ (drawing on uses 5-7) or ‘quietly’ (drawing on uses 10-13). Thus, the adverb seems to show a tendency to restrict itself to a limited number of uses, and generally, these are uses that I take to be quite central. In this respect, the use of the adverb confirms my hypothesis as regards the constitution of the network.

As I have indicated, most of the relatively ‘marginal’ uses are from tragedy. In some cases, *σωφρόνως* relates to respect for religion (my use 17). In A. *Eum.* 44, Orestes is *σωφρόνως ἐστεμμένον* (‘*σωφρόνως* crowned’) in a way that betrays his quiet respect for the oracle. Similarly, Amphiaraus has *σωφρόνως* chosen to bear a shield without signs (E. *Ph.* 1112) that make the god-defying claims of his fellow warriors, and Dikê on the shield of Polynices leads her protégé *σωφρόνως* (A. *Th.* 645), because his claim is that his expedition is not an impious war against his own city state.

Restraint of violence (my use 16) is at stake when in E. *Held.* 1007, Eurystheus asks Alcmene if *she* would have let *him* live *σωφρόνως* (‘unscathed’) in Argos, if their roles had been re-

versed. And submission to authority (my use 14) is at stake when Menelaus in *S. Aj.* 1075 claims that an army can not be commanded *σωφρόνως* ('in an orderly manner') if subjects have no fear for authority.

Elsewhere, *σωφρόνως* often means 'quietly'. In *Hdt.* 4.77, the claim of the Scythian is that the Spartans are the only ones with whom one has time to discuss *σωφρόνως*, Aeschines 3.2 claims that a speaker should ascend the rostrum *σωφρόνως* ('in a calm and dignified manner'), the servant in *Alcestis* complains that Heracles did *not* receive his meal in such a way (*E. Alc.* 753), and the ladies in *Ar. Lys.* 473 promise that they will remain seated *σωφρόνως* ('quietly') like a maiden; the defendants in *Isaeus* 1.1 claim that they were brought up *σωφρόνως* and consequently lack any experience with the courts, and never even went only to witness the proceedings.

Prudential uses of the adverb are met in expressions such as *σωφρόνως βουλευέσθαι* (*Th.* 5.101.1, *D.* 21.74) and *σωφρόνως ἐκλογίζεσθαι* (*Th.* 1.80.3), and also in the notion of the *σώφρων* administration of a *πόλις* (*Pl. Chr.* 162A4 *σωφρόνως οἰκεῖν*).

In the last case, *σωφρόνως* is bound to shade over into 'soberly', 'in a manner that shows moderation and control of desires'. Isocrates is fond of using the adverb in this way in expressions like *σωφρόνως ζῆν* ('living soberly', 4.81, 6.59, 7.7),<sup>14</sup> *σωφρονῶς τὸν αὐτοῦ βίου οἰκονομεῖν* (1.46, 'administrating one's own life in a moderate/self-controlled way') and *σωφρονῶς πολιτεύεσθαι* (15.24 'show self-control in one's citizenship'); Aeschines (2.176) uses this last expression with regard to the restoration of democracy, where *σωφρόνως* also invokes the notion of the avoidance of *στάσις*.

Control of desire is also most frequently relevant to contexts where the adverb is not addressed to the collective of citizens. Aristophanes' knights claim, in their encouragement of the Sausage Seller, that *τὸ σωφρόνως τραφήναι* ('a decent upbringing', *Eq.* 334) brings no success in politics. Both Plato (*R.* 403A7) and Aeschines (1.151) introduce the notion of *σωφρόνως ἐρᾶν* (even if their interpretations rather differ in detail). Finally, in *E. Ba.*

<sup>14</sup> Cf. also *Lys.* 14.41, *D.* 24.126.

686, the Theban maenads are reported to sleep *ωφρόνως*, to counter Pentheus' suspicions of extra-marital sex.

(2) *ωφρονίζειν*, *ωφρονιστής* and *ωφρόνισμα*. The derivatives *ωφρονίζειν*, *ωφρονιστής* and *ωφρόνισμα* are closely connected. The verb *ωφρονίζειν* means 'to make *ώφρων*', a *ωφρονιστής* is a person or institution that makes people *ώφρων*, and a *ωφρόνισμα* is a piece of good advice, a 'summons' to *ωφροσύνη*.

The use of these term is restricted to the other-regarding senses; there are no uses where they have to do with prudence in one's self-interest, or with sanity per se. This probably accords well with the intrinsically transitive meanings of the terms.

On one occasion, the verb *ωφρονίσαι* is used in connection with moderation of expenses; this is in Thucydides 8.1.3, where the Athenians decide to cut down the expenses in the city itself (*τῶν τε κατὰ τὴν πόλιν τι ἐς εὐτέλειαν ωφρονίσαι*) in order to rebuild the navy after the Sicilian expedition. The verb is also used once in connection with 'control of desires': the *Phaedo* speaks of rejecting some pleasures for fear of being deprived of greater pleasures, and calls this 'to have become *ώφρων* somehow out of wantonness' (Pl. *Phd.* 69A4, *τῶι τρόπον τινὰ δι' ἀκολασίαν ... σεσωφρονίσθαι*). The term *ωφρονιστής* is used to refer to the official supervisor of the Athenian ephebes, when Demosthenes (19.285) claims that the Athenian youth does not need Aeschines as *ωφρονιστής*.

In connection with 'quiet behaviour', Antiphon the orator (1.3.3.7) speaks of *ωφρονίσαι τὸ θυμούμενον τῆς γνώμης*, ('calming down the temper of your minds') and Danaus advises his daughters to consider the arrival of the Egyptians in a quiet way (A. *Supp.* 724, *σεσωφρονισμένως*). This play also offers the only use in our corpus of *ωφρόνισμα*, in connection with the many admonitions that Danaus has in store for his daughters (A. *Supp.* 992).

The terms are more frequent in connection with injustice and punishment. Plato (*Grg.* 478D6) claims that punishment *ωφρονίζει* ('makes *ώφρων*') and keeps people from further injus-

tice<sup>15</sup>, hence the prison for not-incorrigible prisoners in *Laws* is called *ωφρονιστήριον* (*Lg.* 908A4, 909A1); Demosthenes 21.227 subscribes to the same view, and elsewhere (25.94) expects the same effect from misfortune.

In Thucydides, finally, *ωφρονίζειν* and *ωφρονιστής* are used in connection with criticism and punishment of violence, both between *πόλεις* and within the single *πόλις* (in the context of civil strife or *στάσις*). According to the Syracusans, the Camarineans should not secretly hope that Syracuse will be defeated by Athens in order that the aggressive impulses of the neighbour state may be held in check (*Th.* 6.78.2 *ἵνα ωφρονισθῶμεν*);<sup>16</sup> by contrast, the Athenians advise these same Camarineans not to act as ‘censors’ (6.87.3 *ωφρονισταί*) of the Athenian foreign policy. In internal politics, supporters of democracy at Athens claim that the *δῆμος* is a *ωφρονιστής* of the *καλοὶ καγαθοί* (8.48.7) and provides a check on their ruthlessness. Conversely, the supporters of oligarchy in Plataea, who hand over their city to the oligarchic Boeotians, are seen by the latter as the *ωφρονισταί* (*Th.* 3.65.3) of their democratic fellow citizens. Here, the use of *ωφροσύνη* and cognates as an oligarchic party slogan rings in the background.

### 5. *An Outlook: Towards Plato*

We have now established, in section 2, the range of traditional uses of *ώφρων* in non-philosophical texts. In the next chapter, we will consider how Plato deals with the concept of *ωφροσύνη*. Here, I will note roughly speaking two tendencies.

On the one hand, we shall observe that Plato fully exploits the polysemy of our terms in argumentative passages, especially in passages that argue for the compatibility, or indeed ‘unity’, of the individual virtues. For arguments of this type, *ωφροσύνη* offers obvious advantages. We have observed how, in one of its uses (my number 15), *ωφροσύνη* is particularly close to *δικαιοσύνη*.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *Crit.* 121C2, *Lg.* 854D5.

<sup>16</sup> Plato echoes this type of use when claiming (*R.* 471A7) that in war between Greeks, good citizens will only fight as *ωφρονισταί* of their fellow Greeks, not as enemies (*πολέμιοι*) in the conventional sense of the word.



And we will see that it is easy to establish a link between *σοφία* and the use of *ωφροσύνη* in the quasi-intellectual sense of prudence. With *ἀνδρεία* the case is not so simple. In many texts, we have observed a tension between the self-assertive qualities associated with martial *ἀρετή* and *ἀνδρεία*, and the more other-regarding uses of *ωφροσύνη*, nowhere more so, perhaps, than in Sophocles' *Ajax* and Thucydides. Similar tensions exist between *ἀνδρεία* and other 'non-competitive' *ἀρεταί*, notably *δικαιοσύνη*. In a number of dialogues, we observe how Plato sets up arguments to establish a link between *ἀνδρεία* and one of those non-competitive *ἀρεταί*. The potential of *ωφροσύνη* in establishing such a connection is most marked in *Gorgias*, where various uses of the term are used to bridge the huge conceptual gap between *ἀνδρεία* and *δικαιοσύνη*.

On the other hand, in establishing a technical definition of *ωφροσύνη*, Plato greatly reduces the vast range of conventional uses. The definitions in *Charmides* all contain terms and expressions associated with *ωφροσύνη* in one or other of its uses, and these are all rejected as not touching the core of the matter. Only the notion of *ωφροσύνη* as 'control of desire' goes unchallenged: it is in fact not even discussed but very clearly invoked at the beginning of the dialogue, so that it is bound to be active in the minds of the readers. We will observe how, elsewhere in Plato, this prototypical use is always the use of the term taken as a point of departure when it is discussed what *ωφροσύνη* actually *is*. Ultimately, the definitions of *ωφροσύνη* in the individual and in the state, as given in *Republic*, would seem to represent Plato's elaboration of two quite central traditional uses of the term, 'control of desire' in the individual and *εὐνομία* in the *πόλις* (my numbers 6 and 18). Here, we see how, in his attempt to go to the heart of the matter, Plato ignores most peripheral uses of the terms, and focuses on the most central uses.

Incidentally, we will also observe how Plato focuses on the most central members of society. He ignores the uses of *ώφρων* and cognates that typically apply to women, girls and servants, and rejects the 'boyish' interpretations given by Charmides, concentrating instead on the prototypical examples of the *ωφροσύνη* of men, both as individuals and in the *πόλις*.

## CHAPTER TEN

### PLATO

#### 1. *Introduction*

In the previous chapter, I sketched an overview of the uses of *σώφρων* and cognates in non-philosophical Greek texts as they were available at the time of Plato (chapter 9.2). I have also tried to show how this polysemy can be fruitfully accounted for by bringing these many uses together in a network of relatively central (prototypical) and marginal uses, connected with each other by family resemblance.

In this chapter, I will try to establish how Plato uses these traditional notions in his discussions on ethics and politics, and in the construction of his own theory of virtue. I think that in this connection, two tendencies can be observed. On the one hand, Plato fully exploits the polysemy of our terms for persuasive effect, specifically in passages that argue for the co-existence, or indeed ‘unity’, of the seemingly disparate traditional virtues. On the other hand, in his own construction of a theory of virtue, Plato greatly reduces this polysemy, and arrives at a definition of *σωφροσύνη* of his own that is based on a very limited number of central uses of the term. Here we can observe how, in his attempt to get to the ‘essence’ of the virtue, Plato focuses on the prototypical uses at the expense of the rather more peripheral ones.

In connection with Plato’s use of the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* in persuasive argumentation, it must be observed that *σωφροσύνη* — given the considerable range of uses sketched in chapter 9 — can easily be linked to each of the other main virtues. In one of its uses (its ‘civic’ use, group 15 in my diagrams), *σωφροσύνη* is nearly synonymous with *δικαιοσύνη*. In its prudential use (group 2), *σωφροσύνη* is more obviously a mental-cognitive capacity, and this use provides a possible link with *σοφία* (both share the general antonym *ἄφροσύνη*), exploited in the discussion in *Protagoras*. And Plato even manages to relate the seemingly very different quality of *ἀνδρεία* to *σωφροσύνη*. In *Laches*, he suggests that a measure of ‘steadfastness’ or ‘courage’

is also involved in controlling one's desires, thus extending the range of *ἀνδρεία* to include prototypical cases of *σωφροσύνη*. In *Gorgias*, by contrast, he argues that the *ἀνδρείος* ruler cannot pursue all pleasures, but needs a faculty to decide which pleasures best serve his long-term interests. Here, *ἀνδρεία* is connected with the prudential use of *σωφροσύνη* in order to show that the brave ruler also needs *σωφροσύνη* in the sense of self-control. Thus *σωφροσύνη* can be invoked to argue for the compatibility of such seemingly disparate qualities as *δικαιοσύνη*, *σοφία* and *ἀνδρεία*. As such, it is used (in *Protagoras*) by Socrates to undermine the position of Protagoras who asserts the essential disparity of the virtues, and it plays a crucial role in *Gorgias* in Socrates' defence of *δικαιοσύνη* against the attacks of Callicles. The first parts of this chapter (sections 2-7) will describe how Plato exploits the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* to achieve this 'reconciliation of opposites', with particular reference to *Laches*, *Protagoras*, *Gorgias* and *Republic*.

In texts that concern themselves with the quest for a definition of *σωφροσύνη*, on the other hand, Plato tends to reduce the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* to a few central uses. This is the subject of sections 8 and 9. In *Charmides* (section 8), the definitions of *σωφροσύνη* that are discussed and rejected, all consist of terms and expressions associated with uses of *σωφροσύνη* that are less than absolutely central. Thus, the dialogue rejects a total equation of *σωφροσύνη* with such concepts as *αἰδώς*, *δικαιοσύνη* or *σοφία*. Ultimately, only the prototypical conception of *σωφροσύνη* as 'control of desires' remains unchallenged; in fact, this notion is not discussed at all, but it is unmistakably activated in the dramatic setting of the dialogue.

In other texts, this notion of control of desires is either taken for granted as a definition of *σωφροσύνη* (*Gorgias*) or taken as a point of departure for further exploration (*Republic*). In *Republic* (section 9), where Plato finally achieves clear-cut technical definitions of each of the virtues, *σωφροσύνη* is defined as a consensus between the ruling and the ruled, both in the individual soul and between the citizens of a *πόλις*. This twin definition seems to be Plato's elaboration (and, partly, his re-interpretation) of two quite central traditional uses of *σωφροσύνη*: 'control of desire' for the individual male citizen

(my group 6) and ‘*εὐνομία*’ (respect for the conventions and the *status quo* in the *πόλις*, number 18) for the citizens of the *πόλις* as a collective. The centrality of these two notions seems of great help to Plato in establishing his analogy of soul and state. Thus, the attempt to define the ‘essence’ of *σωφροσύνη* turns out to be remarkably centripetal: it reduces the concept to what are its prototypical manifestations for the dominant members of society, adult male citizens, both as individuals and as members of the collective body of citizens. As we will see, Plato excludes uses of *σωφροσύνη* that are less than absolutely central, dismisses the ‘boyish’ interpretations of *σωφροσύνη* offered by Charmides, and even completely ignores uses of *σωφροσύνη* that typically apply to women and girls. Incidentally, this ‘centripetal’ definition also serves to establish a clear, if perhaps slightly arbitrary, distinction between *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*: *δικαιοσύνη* is now defined as ‘doing one’s own things’, and as such, seems closely associated with two other relatively central ordinary language uses of *σωφροσύνη* that are not covered by the ‘consensus’-interpretation: ‘quiet’/ἀπράγμων behaviour and restraint from injustice (my groups 10 and 15; for Plato’s demarcation of *σωφροσύνη* as against *δικαιοσύνη*, see fig. 14 on page 253).

## 2. Polysemous *σωφροσύνη* and the ‘Unity’ of Virtue

In the first parts of this chapter, we will investigate how Plato exploits the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* (as described in chapter 9) in persuasive argumentation. Specifically, this polysemy offers considerable dialectical advantages in passages that argue for the compatibility, or indeed the ‘unity’, of the individual virtues or ἀρεταί.

Semantically speaking, the basic phenomenon behind the thorny issue of the ‘unity of virtues’ as defended in *Laches*, *Charmides* and *Protagoras* is the following.<sup>1</sup> There are some

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<sup>1</sup> For the discussion on the ‘unity’ of virtue, see especially Penner (1973), Vlastos (1973) 221-69, Irwin (1977) 86-92, Kraut (1984) ch. 8, esp. 252-70, Penner (1992) 127-8 and n.21, Irwin (1995) 41-4. Penner and Irwin defend the thesis that Socrates took the virtues to be essentially identical (*ἀνδρεία* = *σωφροσύνη* = *δικαιοσύνη* = *σοφία*), Kraut (1984) devotes more attention to the

types of behaviour that are typically assessed in terms of (one particular use of) one virtue term, but can *also* be assessed in terms of (one particular use of) another virtue term. This means that there is a partial overlap between the uses of the two virtue terms: in these particular uses, both terms can refer to the same type of behaviour. An obvious case from our survey has been the close association between the ‘civic’ uses of *κῶπρων* (my group 15 in chapter 9, figure 1) and *δίκαιος*. In many contexts in the orators, especially (see chapter 8.3), the two terms are virtually synonymous. But the Platonic dialogues at hand establish many more such connections: *Laches* hints at an affinity of *ἀνδρεία* and *κῶπρουνή* when it speaks of the ‘courage’ of ‘fighting’ desire (see section 4), both *Laches* and *Protagoras* seize on cognitive, *σοφία*-like aspects of courage, and *Protagoras* and *Charmides* address similar associations for *κῶπρουνή* (for *Protagoras*, see section 3, for *Charmides*, see section 8). In semantic terms, the existence of such connections means that the virtue terms are connected in a larger ‘network’, in which some of their uses overlap and commend the same type of behaviour. There are cases where one type of behaviour can be assessed in terms of more than one virtue.

Now it seems to be good Socratic practice to locate virtue at the ‘background’ level of the ‘state of the soul’ that ‘explains’ virtuous behaviour, rather than on the ‘foreground’ level of the virtuous behaviour itself.<sup>2</sup> For Socrates, virtue is the quality ‘by which’ virtuous acts, and virtuous persons, are virtuous; and his

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fact that at surface level, the virtue terms are used differently: for him, the virtue terms have a different scope and cover different parts of the same continuum. Vlastos by contrast, concentrating on *Protagoras*, claims that Socrates merely held the ‘equivalence’ of the virtues (the *ἀνδρείος* is also *κῶπρων* etc.). As the discussion below will show, I think that the positions of Penner and Kraut are compatible: the first looks at virtue on the level of the ‘quality’ of the soul, the latter focuses on differences of surface level-behaviour. Vlastos’ views on *Protagoras* will not be dealt with here; they seem to require that the strong claims in *Protagoras* are taken at considerably less than their face value.

<sup>2</sup> Thus, Penner (1973) 45 locates the ‘unity’ of the virtues on the level of ‘motive-forces’ or ‘states of soul’: ‘And we will lay it down that the same motive-force or state of soul can result in different kinds of behaviour.’

claim is that a definition of virtue will identify that quality and explain what makes virtuous action virtuous.<sup>3</sup>

Now in the dialogues that concern us here, *Laches*, *Charmides* and *Protagoras*, the typical Socratic response to the situation of single types of behaviour called by multiple virtue names is to conclude that these names refer not only to the same type of behaviour but also to the same state of soul: if the behaviour of repressing or 'fighting' desire is a token of *ἀνδρεία* as well as *σωφροσύνη*, it follows that in such a case the terms *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* describe not only the same type of behaviour but also the same state of soul: they in fact identify the same one and the same state of mind, 'virtue'. This conclusion is by no means inevitable (it may well be unjustified: in principle, nothing precludes the conception of *two* states of soul leading to the same type of behaviour) but the inference seems quite natural at face value, and is in fact made tacitly in these texts.

But if the quality of *σωφροσύνη* overlaps with that of *ἀνδρεία* in one of their manifestations, it should follow that the qualities overlap throughout their different manifestations: for it is a 'Socratic' axiom that it is *one-and-the-same* state of soul that explains all different types of behaviour that are called by the same virtue term.<sup>4</sup> Thus the quality of *ἀνδρεία* that explains the 'courage' of 'fighting desire' will be identical with the quality of *σωφροσύνη* that explains *all* types of acts of *σωφροσύνη*, and *vice versa*. In short, all acts of *ἀνδρεία* and all acts of *σωφροσύνη* are explained in terms of one and the same state of soul, and to that extent, *ἀνδρεία* is identical with *σωφροσύνη*. And given that links can be established between all the individual virtue terms, the conclusion seems to be that the individual virtue terms, however different in their use on surface level,<sup>5</sup> name the same

<sup>3</sup> For this Socratic criterion for definitions, cf. Kraut (1984) 254.

<sup>4</sup> See for instance Socrates' instruction at *La.* 191D10-11 *πάλιν οὖν πειρῶ εἰπεῖν ἀνδρείαν τί ὄν ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις ταῦτ' ἐστιν*, 'now please try again to formulate concerning *ἀνδρεία* what it is that it is the same in all those cases'.

<sup>5</sup> Kraut (1984) 261 seems to focus on this difference in surface level use, when he says that 'the particular virtues blend imperceptibly into one another, like subsegments of a continuous and uniform object.' He quotes the comparison from *Prt.* 329D6-8 of the parts of virtue to the parts of gold, that differ from each other merely (or mainly?) in size. In fact Kraut seems to allow *only* quanti-

‘state of soul’ and are to that extent identical with each other and with virtue *tout court*.<sup>6</sup>

A second characteristic of Socrates’ response in *Laches*, *Protagoras* and *Charmides* is the fact that Socrates identifies this single state of soul behind the particular virtues with a kind of knowledge, the knowledge of good and bad. This is the well-known ‘intellectualism’ of Socrates’ ethics,<sup>7</sup> and in practice, this intellectualism amounts to (re)defining the virtues in terms of *σοφία*. Now there would seem to be two problems with this intellectualist approach. First, it seems by no means obvious that *σοφία* is the suitable candidate to unify the particular virtues: in fact, it does *not* seem to be the central part of the ‘continuum’ (in Kraut’s terms) or ‘network’ of virtue terms. For one thing, there hardly seems to be a direct link between *σοφία* and *δικαιοσύνη*: in *Protagoras*, they are only indirectly linked, *via* *σωφροσύνη* (*Prt.* 332A4 and following, see section 3 below). Moreover, the link between *ἀνδρεία* and *σοφία* as established in *Laches* would seem counter-intuitive rather than self-evident.<sup>8</sup> But there is a second problem connected with the identification of virtue with knowledge, and that is that this identification leaves no room for non-intellectual motives for virtuous action, and, as is well known, even forces one to make the counter-intuitive denial of the possibility of *akrasia*.

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tative differences between parts of virtue. At the ‘surface level’ of behaviour, I do not see that this is necessary.

<sup>6</sup> Penner (1973) 45: ‘Socrates thought that all and only those men with tendencies to brave actions had tendencies to wise actions (these actions being in general different from the former actions). But he may have believed that all of these tendencies sprang from the same motive-force or state of soul (e.g. a certain kind of knowledge).’ Penner’s formulations focus on the background level of the state of soul rather than the foreground level of actions. As such, I think, his views are largely compatible with those of Kraut. The most relevant difference between the two would seem to be that Penner is less restrictive as to what kind of surface-level differences are to be allowed.

Incidentally, Penner’s formulation shows that it is not inevitable, however ‘self-evident’ for Socrates, to identify the virtuous state of soul with ‘a certain kind of knowledge’.

<sup>7</sup> On the intellectualist approach to virtue, see the critique of Arist. *MM* 1182a15-23, and the discussions by Irwin (1995) 75-6, Penner (1992) 125-6.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Laches*’ reaction in *La.* 195A4 *χωρὶς δὴπου σοφία ἐστιν ἀνδρείας*, ‘I had assumed that *σοφία* is completely different from *ἀνδρεία*.’

Thus, Plato's approach elsewhere is different in *two* ways. First, *σωφροσύνη* replaces *σοφία* as the connecting element in the web of virtue. This is most obviously the case in *Gorgias* (see section 5), but in *Republic* the affinities of *σωφροσύνη* with other virtues are also exploited for the construction of the larger network. Besides, Plato also gives up the idea of a strict unity between the virtues. *Gorgias* (507A) shows that the *σώφρων* will *also* be *δίκαιος* and *ἀνδρείος*, and thus seems to argue for a co-existence of virtues (even if, below surface level, this co-existence still seems to spring from a specific 'ordering', or *τάξις*, in the soul). *Republic* on the other hand gives up even this idea of co-existence of all the virtues; for instance, it allows for citizens with *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* who lack *σοφία*. By contrast, the dialogue has much to say on how the problematic reconciliation of *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* is to be achieved (section 6).

In the following, I will first discuss *Protagoras* and its connection between *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* and *σοφία* (section 3). The reconciliation of the 'opposites' of *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* is the subject of the sections that follow (4-6). Here, *Gorgias* (section 5) is the culmination point, but the theme of *ἀνδρεία* runs through Plato's work, so we will briefly look into some other texts, *Laches* (section 4), which hints at a partial overlap between *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* without pressing the point, and *Republic* and *Politicus* (section 6), which have rather a lot to say on the reconciliation between *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* on a practical level.

### 3. *Σωφροσύνη, σοφία and δικαιοσύνη*: Protagoras

A dialogue that offers an elaborate example of an argumentation for the unity of the virtues, is *Protagoras*. At the start of the dialectical discussion that forms the second part of this dialogue, Protagoras is led to claim that the *ἀρεταί* are fundamentally distinct from each other: the 'parts' of *ἀρετή* are more like the parts of a face than like parts of gold (329D-E).

The claim that the virtues are fundamentally distinct from each other seems quite compatible with the views ascribed to



Protagoras in the myth at the beginning of the dialogue.<sup>9</sup> In fact, in the myth the virtues seem so thoroughly distinct that they vary considerably in function and importance. Protagoras' story stresses the vital importance of *αἰδώς* and *δίκη* (322C2), sent by Zeus to ensure the possibility of a stable community. This means that the virtues that correspond to *αἰδώς* and *δίκη*, *σωφροσύνη* (in the 'political' or 'civic' sense of 'keeping from injustice and violence') and *δικαιοσύνη* (323A1-2), are essential qualities for the stability of the *πόλις*.<sup>10</sup> And the later sections of Protagoras' exposé suggest that *ὀσιότης* performs a similar function.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, Protagoras' theory of political *ἀρετή* does not incorporate all traditional virtues. The myth addresses *σοφία* only at the level of technical skills that human beings need for survival (321D4 *τὴν περὶ τοῦ βίου σοφίαν*), places religious practices at largely the same level (man's penchant for religion is ascribed to his share in the technical skills of the gods, 322A3-5), and completely ignores the martial quality of *ἀνδρεία*. Protagoras' political theory as represented by Plato seems to be very much a peacetime political theory, surely groundbreaking in its emphasis on co-operative values,<sup>12</sup> but

<sup>9</sup> In recent times, commentators mostly tend to the view that in the myth (as opposed to the following dialectical sections of the dialogue), Plato is giving us a reasonably fair representation of what he took to be Protagoras' views. For a discussion, see Dietz (1976) 115-6, Morgan (2000), 132-54. Cautionary remarks in Sihvola (1989) 78-84.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Kahn (1996) 217: 'Protagoras does offer a solid defense for what Adkins has called the quiet or cooperative virtues of justice and temperance. These are precisely the virtues that Plato in the *Republic* will assign to all the citizens, including the lowest and most numerous of his three classes.'

<sup>11</sup> The role of *ὀσιότης* in relation to *ἀρετή* here is not entirely clear. In the myth itself, worshipping the gods is included among the basic skills of humanity (322A3-5) and thus excluded from *πολιτική ἀρετή*, and this would seem to accord well with Protagoras' reputation for 'agnosticism', but in 323E3, *ἄεβεία* is included among the opposites of political *ἀρετή*, and afterwards, *ὀσιότης* tends to be bracketed with *δικαιοσύνη* and *σωφροσύνη* among the political *ἀρεταί*. It may well be that the gradual inclusion of *ὀσιότης* is to be ascribed to a persuasive strategy of Plato rather than to Protagoras' political theory itself.

Protagoras' reputation for 'agnosticism' is based on fr. DK 80, B 4; for the 'agnostic' (rather than a more fundamentally 'atheistic') interpretation of this fragment, see Dietz (1976) 138-40, De Romilly (1988) 147-8. On the limited contribution of religion to the political aspects of society, cf. De Romilly (1988) 228.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Sicking (1998) 178.

arguably naive in its complete reliance on these ‘quiet’ virtues for dealing with potential conflicts.<sup>13</sup>

Protagoras offers this long exposé of his political views in answer to Socrates’ question whether *ἀρετή* can be taught. In defence of his reputation as a teacher, Protagoras firmly asserts that *ἀρετή* can indeed be taught.<sup>14</sup> According to him, political *ἀρετή*, based on *αἰδώς* and *δίκη* (322C2) and thus including *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*, is to some extent shared by all people, and all education — of which his own teaching apparently constitutes the summit (328B2) — aims at the enhancement of this quality (324D-326E). The *σωφροσύνη* encountered here is not the purely ‘individual’ *ἀρετή* of control of desires that we will meet in *Gorgias* and at the start of *Charmides*, but rather the civic type of *σωφροσύνη* that keeps men from aggression against their fellow citizens (use 16).

In response to Protagoras’ exposé, Socrates leads his interlocutor to concede that *ἀνδρεία* and *σοφία* are also virtues — a fatal move for Protagoras’ position, as it turns out, but Protagoras seems to be too respectful of tradition to make radical claims and exclude *ἀνδρεία* from the list of virtues. Protagoras is then asked to consider whether these five virtues (*δικαιοσύνη*, *σωφροσύνη*, *οἰοτής*, *ἀνδρεία*, *σοφία*) are identical or not, and so he is made to claim that these five virtues are not different names for what is essentially the same thing, but in fact separate parts of *ἀρετή* that are wholly distinct from each other, like the parts of the human face. Protagoras even claims that one may have one *ἀρετή* but lack another; thus, there are many soldiers who are *ἀνδρείοι* but *ἄδικοι*, and others who are *δίκαιοι* but not *σοφοί* (329E5-6).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *αἰδώς* and *δίκη* are supposed to cope with *στάσις*. Otherwise, there is no mention of conflict between humans: wars between *πόλεις* are ignored in the *Protagoras* myth; the only type of ‘war’ that the myth acknowledges is that against wild animals (322B4).

<sup>14</sup> It is on this point that the dialogue runs into *ἀπορία*: at the end of the dialogue, it is Socrates who now seems convinced that *ἀρετή* is teachable, whereas Protagoras seems to hold the opposite (361A-B). On Socrates’ use of ‘tactical moves’ and ‘manipulative and insincere’ reasoning, see Kahn (1996) 241-3.

<sup>15</sup> If the *δικαιοσύνη* that some people lack is not the basic sense of *δίκη* prominent in Protagoras’ *λόγος*, but the ‘advanced’ *δικαιοσύνη* of more civilised

This claim is challenged by Socrates in the remainder of the dialogue, the aim of which seems to be to show that Protagoras cannot uphold this claim about the *ἀρεταί*, which in turn of course undermines his trustworthiness as an expert in the field of virtue.

In the first dialectical part of the discussion, Socrates challenges Protagoras' thesis by identifying as many virtues as possible.<sup>16</sup> Protagoras is first challenged by an argument that centres on the close affinity between *δικαιοσύνη* and *όσιότης*.<sup>17</sup> The second argument (332A4-333B6) hinges on the point that *σωφροσύνη* (in its prudential use) and *σοφία* share *ἀφροσύνη* as an opposite; on the agreed assumption that a *πρᾶγμα* has only one opposite (332D1-3), this would mean that *σωφροσύνη* and *σοφία* are just two names for the same thing. Together, these two arguments suggest — though no attempt is made to make Protagoras agree with the conclusion<sup>18</sup> — that *όσιότης* is *δικαιοσύνη* and

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standards (cf. 327C-D), there is no direct contradiction with Protagoras' speech. Still, what Protagoras says here perhaps reflects common Greek usage, in which *ἀνδρεία* is frequently contrasted to the more 'quiet' virtues, rather than any particular views expressed in Protagoras' speech. On the possibility that Plato misrepresents Protagoras' views, see Sicking (1998) 189-190.

<sup>16</sup> The arguments are not finished properly, but they unmistakably suggest that the virtues in question are *identified* by Socrates. Thus, I prefer Penner's straightforward reading of the passage (1973) 49-60 to Vlastos' reinterpretation, (1973), 234-46, according to which the unity thesis means that the particular virtues share the same qualities. For this, there seems insufficient signals in the text.

<sup>17</sup> 331A-332A. In what seems to be a parody of Protagoras' eristic methods, Protagoras states that *δικαιοσύνη* and *όσιότης* are both rather similar (331D2) and somewhat different (331C2), so that one could argue both cases.

The argument about the similarity between the two virtues of course calls to mind the conclusion at Euthyphro 12D 1-3, that *τὸ ὅσιον* is a part of *τὸ δίκαιον*. In the remainder of that dialogue, it is fruitlessly attempted to identify what specific part *όσιότης* is, see Kahn (1996) 173. In view of the very different functions of religious activities and *δικαιοσύνη* in the myth (cf. p. 300 n. 11 above), it seems doubtful again that Plato is addressing Protagoras' own views here; it may rather be the case that he proceeds on the assumption that Protagoras is unwilling to contradict *idées reçues* on morality.

<sup>18</sup> On Plato's reading of Protagoras' *homo mensura*, it would be meaningless for Protagoras to agree with one statement rather than the other, for both are necessarily equally true, cf. Sicking (1998) 193-4, and *ibid.* 168.

*σωφροσύνη* equals *σοφία*; all that is still missing is a link between the two groups.

This link is, significantly, provided by *σωφροσύνη*. The third argument addresses the question whether or not it is possible to be *σώφρων* while committing injustice (*ἀδικῶν* ... *σωφρονεῖν*, 333B8-9). This is a thesis that Protagoras emphatically refuses to accept himself, and indeed, it is at least paradoxical given the traditional close association of the two. One would probably have to think of someone who prudently serves his own interests while doing injustice: maybe the farmer in *E. El.* 50-3, who claims that there are some who consider him a fool because he does not take advantage of his marriage with Electra, has a rather similar type of person in mind. (Read like this, it is, in fact, the sort of view that Callicles in *Gorgias* might have taken, if Socrates had not lured him into a complete rejection of *σωφροσύνη*.) In any case, the conception of the *σώφρων* *ἄδικος* is in principle fully compatible with Protagoras' thesis that the virtues differ from each other, and Protagoras agrees that many people do indeed accept it.

Socrates embarks on the refutation of this thesis (333D3-E1) by suggesting that *σωφρονεῖν*, in its prudential sense of *εὖ βουλευέσθαι* (333D6), entails that one is successful in one's actions: *σωφρονεῖν* entails *εὖ πράττειν* ('faring well', 33D7). But *εὖ πράττειν* can also be taken as 'acting right', and this prepares for a re-interpretation of 'prudential' *σωφροσύνη* in other-regarding terms: it is now suggested that *σωφροσύνη* in its guise of '*εὖ πράττειν*' means 'doing *ἀγαθά*', i.e. doing what is useful (*ὠφέλιμά*, 333D9) for people. This of course prepares for the conclusion that *σωφροσύνη*, even in its prudential use, is nothing else than justice. But the argument is not finished properly, but interrupted by an exposé by Protagoras on the various uses of the term *ὠφέλιμον*. Thus, again, Protagoras is not forced to accept the outcome of the argument, but if the reader accepts Plato's reinterpretation of 'prudential' *σωφροσύνη* in other-regarding terms and finishes the third argument for himself, it should read that *σωφροσύνη* is the same as *δικαιοσύνη*. Given that the first two arguments established the identity of *δικαιοσύνη* and *οἰοῖται* as well as that of *σωφροσύνη* with *σοφία*, the conclusion now seems to be that four of the five virtues un-

der examination are not distinct after all. The essential semantic links that lie at the basis of this identification are provided by *σωφροσύνη*, which is associated with both *δικαιοσύνη* and *σοφία*.

That leaves *ἀνδρεία*. When the discussion of Protagoras' thesis on *ἀρετή* is resumed, Protagoras now claims 'that the four virtues are quite close to each other, but that *ἀνδρεία* is utterly different from them all' (349D3-5 *τὰ μὲν τέτταρα αὐτῶν ἐπιεικῶς παραπλήσια ἀλλήλοις ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ ἀνδρεία πάνυ πολὺ διαφέρει πάντων τούτων*).

In the refutation of this claim, it is demonstrated by Socrates that *ἀνδρεία* also depends on a proper judgement concerning the 'things' to be pursued and avoided, and so it appears that *ἀνδρεία* is in fact nothing else than *σοφία*. Now everyone is found to agree against Protagoras<sup>19</sup> that the virtues are not distinct from each other, but that they are all ultimately based on one and the same thing, *σοφία* or knowledge.

Thus we see how, in *Protagoras*, *σωφροσύνη* plays a role in Socrates' arguments against Protagoras, for the unity of the virtues. Specifically, *σωφροσύνη* has semantic links with both *σοφία* and *δικαιοσύνη*, and is thus at the basis of the identification of these three virtues. The link of *ἀνδρεία* with the other virtues is not made via *σωφροσύνη*, but by means of the 'Socratic' notion that virtue is based on a proper judgement about the good and the bad, and hence resides in knowledge. As we will see in section 5, *Gorgias* offers a rather similar type of argument in which *ἀνδρεία* is linked not with *σοφία* but with (the prudential use of) *σωφροσύνη*. It seems that here we have an argument that can be pursued in two directions: when *ἀνδρεία* is shown to involve good judgement, it can be linked either to the 'wisdom' of *σοφία*, or the 'prudential' variety of *σωφροσύνη*, according to the needs of the passage at hand.

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<sup>19</sup> Collecting a maximum number of counter-votes is not the normal procedure of Socratic elenchus; for its significance in a discussion with Protagoras, see Sicking (1998) 197-8.

4. *ᾠφροσύνη and ἀνδρεία* : Laches

We have observed how, in *Protagoras*, ἀνδρεία is redefined in terms of (Socratic) σοφία or knowledge. By implication, the 'martial', 'self-assertive' quality of ἀνδρεία is then also linked to the more typically other-regarding virtues of ᾠφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη. But there is a long history of tension between ἀνδρεία and these other-regarding virtues.

At first sight, it would not perhaps seem that ᾠφροσύνη provides a suitable tool to accomplish the reconciliation of the self-assertive ἀνδρεία and the more other-regarding, cooperative qualities. In the earliest instance of καὶφρων in Greek literature, there is in fact already an implicit tension between ᾠφροσύνη and ἀνδρεία. In *Iliad* 21.462-9, Apollo is challenged to combat by his uncle, and thus invited to display his martial ἀρετή, but he declines with an appeal to ᾠφροσύνη (chapter 2.2). And while, in the *Iliad*, it is never in doubt that martial success depends on a measure of deliberation and prudence (as can be seen from the example of heroes who lose their φρένες and make fatal mistakes, chapter 2.3), it is equally clear that καοφροσύνη itself hardly belongs to the discourse of war and courage. The tendency is reinforced in later literature. In archaic literature, ᾠφροσύνη is mainly the province of citizens who refrain from στάσις and revolt (chapter 3.2), and similarly, in Aeschylus, ᾠφροσύνη is the quality of those who refrain from undue violence (chapter 4.2). The tension between the two concepts is put forward even more strongly in Sophocles' *Ajax* (chapter 5.2). Because of his eminent martial qualities, the hero of that play is temperamentally incapable of the ᾠφροσύνη demanded by his surroundings. And the most vivid illustrations of the clash between a martial attitude and prudent restraint occur in Thucydides, climaxing in the description of στάσις at Corcyra (3.82, see chapter 7.3.4), where restraint is decied as ἀνανδρία, and unwarranted aggression vehemently embraced.

So the general tendency of Greek thought would seem to be that ἀνδρεία and ᾠφροσύνη, though both acknowledged virtues, belong to fundamentally different contexts and are in fact rarely found in conjunction. Nevertheless, there are several pas-

sages where Plato manages to establish an affinity between the two. In this section, we will first look briefly into *Laches*, where Plato *implies* an affinity between ἀνδρεία and σωφροσύνη but does not explicitly pursue this point. After that (section 5), we will examine *Gorgias*, where ἀνδρεία is explicitly linked to σωφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη. Finally (section 6), we will briefly examine some passages from *Republic* and *Politicus*, that throw further light on Plato's thought concerning the tenuous link between the two qualities.

In *Laches*, ἀνδρεία is ultimately linked to σοφία, as it was in *Protagoras*. Yet there is one passage that implies that ἀνδρεία is also relevant to behaviour that would normally be regarded as the prototypical manifestation of σωφροσύνη. To this extent, *Laches* already seems to suggest that ἀνδρεία can be directly linked to the latter, in the sense that the terms are synonymous in one of their uses.

The approach that Plato chooses in *Laches* is to extend the concept of ἀνδρεία to include the prototypical manifestation of σωφροσύνη as 'control of desire'. This can be done when 'desire' is construed as a 'danger' that has to be 'fought'. For this purpose, the conceptualisation of the σωφροσύνη of 'control of desires' as 'having power over oneself' (κρατεῖν ἑαυτόν) or 'being stronger than oneself' (κρείττων ἑαυτοῦ) helps establish martial associations for this type of use.<sup>20</sup> To that extent, Plato here elaborates on the conventional imagery of σωφροσύνη.

In the dialectical discussion on ἀνδρεία, Laches starts with providing a suitably 'martial' definition of ἀνδρεία as 'being prepared to remain at one's post and fight the enemy without fleeing' (190E5-6 εἰ γάρ τις ἐθέλοι ἐν τῇ τάξει μένων ἀμύνεσθαι τοὺς πολεμίους καὶ μὴ φεύγει). Not content with what merely seems to be an (admittedly appropriate) *example* of ἀνδρεία, Socrates cites a number of further examples of ἀνδρεία, and greatly expands the scope of the virtue to include the behaviour typically associated with σωφροσύνη:

<sup>20</sup> Cf. especially E. *Hipp.* 398-9 (chapter 6.4) and Antiphon fr. 58, 59 (cited in section 6 below).

Ω. Τοῦτο τοῖνυν ὁ ἄρτι ἔλεγον, ὅτι ἐγὼ αἵτιος μὴ καλῶς σε ἀποκρίνασθαι, ὅτι οὐ καλῶς ἠρόμην—βουλόμενος γάρ σου πυθέσθαι μὴ μόνον τοὺς ἐν τῷ ὀπλιτικῷ ἀνδρείους, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἐν τῷ ἱππικῷ καὶ ἐν κύμπαντι τῷ πολεμικῷ εἶδει, καὶ μὴ μόνον τοὺς ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς ἐν τοῖς πρὸς τὴν θάλατταν κινδύνους ἀνδρείους ὄντας, καὶ ὅσοι γε πρὸς νόσους καὶ ὅσοι πρὸς πενίας ἢ καὶ πρὸς τὰ πολιτικά ἀνδρεῖοί εἰσιν, καὶ ἔτι αὖ μὴ μόνον ὅσοι πρὸς λύπας ἀνδρεῖοί εἰσιν ἢ φόβους, ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς ἐπιθυμίας ἢ ἡδονὰς δεινοὶ μάχεσθαι, καὶ μένοντες καὶ ἀναστρέφοντες—εἰς γὰρ πού τινας, ὦ Λάχης, καὶ ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἀνδρεῖοι.  
(Pl. *La.* 189C7-E2)

Well, this is what I meant just now, that I am to blame if you did not answer in the right manner, because I did not ask in the right manner. For I wanted to hear from you not only about those who are brave in the infantry, but also about those in the cavalry and in the entire category of warfare. And I had in mind not only those who are brave in warfare, but also those who are brave in dangers at sea, and those who are brave with regard to disease and poverty and public life. And yet again not only those who are brave with regard to pain and fear, but also those who are good at fighting desire and pleasure, both in standing firm and turning away. For surely, Laches, there are also people who are brave in such circumstances.

Starting with the prototypical example of *ἀνδρεία*,<sup>21</sup> — fighting a human enemy while remaining at one's post without fleeing — Socrates extends the scope of the virtue to include what are probably less typical cases. (The threefold repetition of *μὴ μόνον* ... *ἀλλὰ καὶ* draws the reader's attention to the process of extension.) In these additional examples, *ἀνδρεία* is first made to include firm action in the face of non-human dangers (such as storms at sea) in addition to actually fighting human enemies. The scope of *ἀνδρεία* is then extended to endurance of distressful situations (illness, poverty), situations that are no doubt to be feared, but that perhaps require a measure of forbearance rather than immediate physical action. Finally, the scope of *ἀνδρεία* is extended yet further (*ἔτι αὖ*) to include the highly metaphorical 'fighting' of pleasures and desires. Here, one has to suppose that these pleasures and desires constitute a

<sup>21</sup> For martial courage as the prototypical example of *ἀνδρεία*, see Sluiter & Rosen (2003), 5-8, and cf. Hobbs (2000).



kind of danger, and that they have to be ‘fought’ or ‘fled’ rather than pursued. This suggests that control of desires is also a ‘martial’ activity, and the formulation (πρὸς ἐπιθυμίας ἢ ἡδονᾶς) δεινοὶ μάχεσθαι, καὶ μένοντες καὶ ἀναστρέφοντες (‘those who are *good at fighting* desire and pleasure, both in *standing firm* and *turning away*’) emphasises the martial associations. If so, the term ἀνδρεία also applies to situations that could equally be regarded as typical manifestations of σωφροσύνη (in the sense of ‘control of desires’): to this extent, the virtues are made to overlap, and there is a subliminal suggestion that — in Socratic terms — they name manifestations of the same state of the soul.

In *Laches*, however, the equation of ἀνδρεία and σωφροσύνη, while strongly suggested in the passage we have examined, is not pursued further. In the remainder of the dialogue, ἀνδρεία is linked to σοφία, and therewith to virtue as a whole. On the basis of the examples given by Socrates, Laches now redefines ἀνδρεία as καρτερία τις, ‘some kind of endurance’ (καρτερία, 192D10) — for all his lack of dialectical sophistication, Laches is well able to identify correctly the common factor between courage and control of desire.<sup>22</sup> This definition is again found wanting, for it soon transpires that καρτερία is a broad term that includes many types of ‘obdurate’ behaviour that do not qualify as ἀνδρεία. Accordingly, the definition is modified: it is now suggested that it is only φρόνιμος καρτερία that may count as ἀνδρεία (192E10). This is a notion that Laches is disinclined to challenge, but incapable of defending adequately.

The idea that ἀνδρεία requires some kind of ‘sensible endurance’<sup>23</sup> is then taken up by Nicias, who follows the Socratic equation of virtue with knowledge (194D1-2) and defines ἀνδρεία as a type of σοφία, and more specifically as the ‘knowledge of what is to be feared and what is not’ (194E11-195A1, τὴν τῶν δεινῶν ἐπιστήμην). In the discussion that follows Nicias makes

<sup>22</sup> For the link between σωφροσύνη and καρτερία, cf. Thgn. 479-83, X. *Smp.* 8.8 (linked with ῥώμη and ἀνδρεία), Pl. *Grg.* 507B4-8, Arist. *EN* 1145b14-15, *Pol.* 1334a19-25, Isoc. 12.197.

<sup>23</sup> It seems clear that the reader is intended to infer that καρτερία is a central element of ἀνδρεία, even though Laches’ definition is defeated. See O’Brien (1963), D.T. Devereux (1977). Contra Irwin (1995) 360n.29.

two important observations on this type of ‘knowledge’: first, that *ἀνδρεία* is unlike technical knowledge in that it entails a value judgement on which dangers are to be faced and which are not, a type of judgement that is not necessarily available to ordinary craftsmen like doctors or seers (195b-196A),<sup>24</sup> and second, that this type of rational judgement is indeed unavailable to animals, children, and many adults with insufficient capacity for reasoning (196D-197B). Here, we seem to be close to the capacity of ‘measurement’ from *Protagoras*.

Indeed, Nicias’ definition and his Socratic equation of *ἀνδρεία* and *ἐπιστήμη* runs into trouble precisely on the ground that *ἀνδρεία* is now to be equated with virtue in general. If *ἀνδρεία* is ‘knowledge of what is to be feared and what is not’, and hence of future good and evil (198B), it is impossible to distinguish *ἀνδρεία* from knowledge of good and evil *tout court*, and hence from virtue in general (199C-D), for knowledge of the future can not be separated from knowledge about the past and present (198D-199A). Thus, the Socratic equation of *ἀνδρεία* with *σοφία* runs into problems of demarcation that are quite similar to the problems connected with the definition of *σωφροσύνη* as a type of ‘knowledge’ in *Charmides* (for which, see section 8). It is on this account that the discussion reaches its *ἀπορία*: Socrates and his interlocutors prove unable to give an account of *ἀνδρεία* that shows the virtue to be akin to, and yet distinct from, the other virtues.

Thus, while *Laches* ends with the thoroughly Socratic reduction of all virtues to knowledge, the dialogue offers an important hint how *ἀνδρεία* could be linked to *σωφροσύνη* even outside the context of this equation. A second, more elaborate and more sophisticated approach is taken in *Gorgias*, to which we will now turn.

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<sup>24</sup> For Nicias, doctors are ordinary craftsmen who are unable to decide on the moral issue whether it is better for the patient to live or die, and thus whether he should apply or withhold treatment. This refers to a medical debate on the issue whether the doctor was free to withhold treatment in desperate cases. See Rosen & Horstmannshoff (2003).

5. *ᾠροροϋνη and ἀνδρεία* : Gorgias

In *Gorgias*, Socrates is confronted with a discussion partner, Callicles,<sup>25</sup> who firmly rejects *δικαιοϋνη* and extols *ἀνδρεία* and *φρόνησις*. Hence Callicles presents Socrates with a direct challenge to demonstrate the compatibility of *ἀνδρεία* and the other-regarding virtues. In the process, *Gorgias* is the first full-scale discussion<sup>26</sup> of political *ἀρετή*.<sup>27</sup>

Though it starts, as its sub-title suggests, as a dialogue on rhetoric (*περὶ ῥητορικῆς*), the two themes of 'rhetoric' and the moral foundations of political life are connected as soon as Gorgias, Socrates' first interlocutor, is led to claim that the true subject matter of rhetoric is 'what is just and unjust' (454B7 *περὶ τούτων ἃ ἔστι δίκαιά τε καὶ ἄδικο*). Gorgias at first claims that his job as a teacher of rhetoric is only to teach persuasion, and admits the possibility that others may misuse this skill, but then feels 'ashamed' to claim that the orator does not need moral expertise or the ability to teach it; consequently, he is forced to admit that the orator will have to know what justice is and cannot willingly abuse this knowledge. Thus, he is shown to contradict himself.

The second interlocutor, Polos, now takes an explicitly immoralist stance, and claims that 'doing wrong' (*ἀδικεῖν*) is better than 'suffering it' (*ἀδικεῖσθαι*), but he lacks the temerity to deny against common usage that doing wrong is 'more unseemly' (*αἷχιον*, 474C7), and on this account he is also caught up in contradiction. It is left for the third interlocutor, Callicles, to make a full 'immoralist' attack on the conventional notion of *δικαιοϋνη*, which he regards as invented by the weak in order to check the ambitions of the strong, and to launch a parallel

<sup>25</sup> On the enigmatic figure of Callicles, otherwise unknown to us, see Dodds (1959) 12-5.

<sup>26</sup> It is impossible to date the *Gorgias* in relation to other 'early' dialogues considered here, such as *Charmides* and *Protagoras*. Dodds (1959) 18-24 argues that *Gorgias* comes relatively late in the first group of dialogues, Kahn (1996) 128 claims that it is probably an early work in view of the absence of many of the methodological procedures found in the so-called dialogues of definition.

<sup>27</sup> Olympiodoros p. 3.6 Norvin defines the σκοπός of the dialogue as *περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν διαλεχθῆναι τῶν φερουσῶν ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν πολιτικὴν εὐδαιμονίαν*. See Dodds (1959) 1.

attack on the life of the philosopher, whom he regards as singularly unequipped for a successfully self-assertive life in the πόλις. And it is in answer to these attacks that Socrates has to show the paramount value of δικαιοσύνη as a political virtue, and to demonstrate that the philosopher is the only πολιτικός in the true sense of the word.

What Socrates has to show, then, in his discussion with Callicles, is that strong men who should rule cannot do so without δικαιοσύνη, i.e. that δικαιοσύνη is a necessary condition for ἀνδρεία as understood by Callicles. Here, σωφροσύνη is explicitly given the role of an intermediary between ἀνδρεία and δικαιοσύνη. Socrates will argue that Callicles' strong men, rather than acting on each and every impulse, need the ability to decide which pleasures to pursue and which not. This is basically the argument that the ἀνδρεῖος should be able to make right decisions, familiar from *Laches* and *Protagoras*, but this capacity is now related to (prudential) σωφροσύνη rather than the Socratic conception of σοφία. Socrates eventually makes Callicles accept (i) that the ἀνδρεῖος needs a kind of prudence that can be related to σωφροσύνη, and (ii) that σωφροσύνη entails δικαιοσύνη.

Now the second of these arguments does not necessarily follow from the first. It relates to a different use of σωφροσύνη (other-regarding 'restraint of violence and injustice' vs. self-regarding 'prudence'). Therefore, if it is accepted that ἀνδρεία does not go without σωφροσύνη in the sense of prudence, this does not mean that the ἀνδρεῖος as σῶφρων should also be δίκαιος. Socrates' argumentation is plausible only if he manages to gloss over the different uses of σωφροσύνη involved in the two arguments, and to secure the acceptance of σωφροσύνη *tout court* from his opponent.

Paradoxically, perhaps, Socrates first elicits from Callicles a complete *rejection* of σωφροσύνη in the prototypical use of 'control of desires'. This control of desires is something that Callicles loathes, and he is persuaded to reject σωφροσύνη entirely and adopt a position of indiscriminating hedonism.<sup>28</sup> This rejection of σωφροσύνη serves to strengthen the plausibility of Socrates' arguments against Callicles. For when Callicles is ulti-

<sup>28</sup> On the connection between the two, see Irwin (1977) 119-20.

mately forced to accept that his rulers do after all need *σωφροσύνη* (if in a different use), it seems that he is caught in contradiction.

Socrates' introduction of *σωφροσύνη* into the discussion is very elaborate, and this seems to underline both the vital role of *σωφροσύνη* for the discussion, and Callicles' complete hostility to the type of *σωφροσύνη* at hand. When Callicles states that the strong are those who are *φρόνιμοι* and *ἀνδρεῖοι*, and that they have the right to rule without regard for justice, Socrates asks whether they should also rule over themselves.

ΣΩ. τί δὲ αὐτῶν, ὦ ἑταῖρε;

ΚΑΛ. τιῇ τί;

ΣΩ. ἄρχοντας ἢ ἀρχομενους;

ΚΑΛ. πῶς λέγεις;

ΣΩ. ἕνα ἕκαστον λέγω αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχοντα· ἢ τοῦτο μὲν οὐδὲν δεῖ, αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχειν, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων;

ΚΑΛ. πῶς ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχοντα λέγεις;

ΣΩ. οὐδὲν ποικίλον, ἀλλ' ὥςπερ οἱ πολλοί, σῶφρονα ὄντα καὶ ἐγκρατῆ αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ, τῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἄρχοντα τῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

ΚΑΛ. ὥς ἡδὺς εἶ· τοὺς ἡλιθίους λέγεις τοὺς σῶφρονας.

(Pl. *Grg.* 491D4-E1)

*So.* But what about themselves, my friend?

*Kal.* What on earth do you mean?

*So.* Are they to rule or to be ruled?

*Kal.* How do you mean?

*So.* I mean that every single one of them rules over himself. Or is there no need whatever for that, to rule over oneself, but just to rule over the rest?

*Kal.* What do you mean by 'ruling over oneself'?

*So.* Nothing intricate, but the same as the many, being σῶφρων and in control of oneself, ruling over one's inner pleasures and desires.

*Kal.* How funny you are! You call the silly the σῶφρονες.

Socrates' interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* as control of pleasures and desires is, indeed, 'nothing intricate', (οὐδὲν ποικίλον), but rather the central use of the word. In this respect, Callicles' apparent failure to grasp Socrates' intention seems surprising. But Socrates' initial paraphrase of this familiar concept is indeed puzzling. Taking his clue from Callicles' speech, in which the concept of 'ruling' (ἄρχειν) was very dominant, he describes the

concept as *αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχειν* ('ruling over oneself'), substituting the verb *ἄρχειν* for the more idiomatic *κρατεῖν* ('being stronger than oneself'). This makes for a seemingly 'spontaneous' introduction of *σωφροσύνη*, and in a context where its presence was hardly to be expected.<sup>29</sup> This sufficiently explains Callicles' initial misunderstanding.

Now this 'control of pleasures and desires' is something that Callicles is bound to reject after his insistence that the strong should rule and should be allowed to 'have more' (*πλέον ἔχειν*). And indeed, Callicles duly rejects it. His remark that Socrates wrongly identifies the silly with the *σώφρονες* is perhaps a hint that there is an alternative interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* that Callicles would not so readily reject: that of *σωφροσύνη* as the prudent deliberation that allows the strong to maximise the fulfilment of their own interests. He has insisted, after all, that his rulers should be *φρόνιμοι* (491B1). But Socrates has invited him to either accept or fully reject the notion of 'ruling over oneself' (491D8 *ἢ τούτων μὲν οὐδὲν δεῖ, αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ ἄρχειν*), and in response, Callicles goes for the rejection of *σωφροσύνη* (a term which he now uses three times in the 'incorrect' conventional sense he just rejected: 492A8, 492B4, 492C1). This *σωφροσύνη*, he suggests, is used as a term of approval only by those who are unable to gratify all their desires because of their 'lack of manliness' (492B2 *διὰ τὴν αὐτῶν ἀνανδρίαν*).<sup>30</sup> Callicles therewith commits himself to an unqualified hedonism that does not go well with his elitist political views, and forces him to

<sup>29</sup> In fact, *σωφροσύνη* was not mentioned earlier in the dialogue, except for a passing allusion in Socrates' discussion with Polos, where Socrates briefly hints at the affinity between the two virtues: *Grg.* 478D6-7 *σωφρονίζει γὰρ πον καὶ δικαιοτέρους ποιεῖ καὶ ἱατρικὴ γίγνεται πονηρίας ἢ δίκη*. 'Punishment makes people sober and more righteous, I suppose, and is a healing for wickedness.'

<sup>30</sup> As in *Thuc.* 3.82, *ἀνανδρία* substitutes for *σωφροσύνη* as a term to describe the same type of unassertive behaviour. Unassertive behaviour is *σωφροσύνη* for those who find it commendable, *ἀνανδρία* for those who wish to reject it.

Callicles' expression of the common thought that *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* are strongly contrasted, prepares us for the passage at 506C-507C, where Socrates deduces the need for, and co-occurrence of, *σωφροσύνη*, *δικαιοσύνη*, *οἰότης* and *ἀνδρεία*.

accept consequences that he himself finds utterly vulgar and shameful (cf. 494E7).<sup>31</sup>

Indeed, Callicles does not manage to keep up this position of unqualified hedonism. Socrates makes him agree that not all pleasures are good, and that the good prevails over the pleasant: hence not all pleasures are to be fulfilled (499B-500A).<sup>32</sup> This implies that one needs sound judgements on the relative merits of various kinds of pleasures. What one needs is, in fact, a kind of prudence.

From here on, *σωφροσύνη* is brought back into the discussion, though in the rather different use of 'prudence'. The search is now for a *τεχνικός* who can decide on the question which desires are to be fulfilled and which are to be rejected. Socrates suggests that such a man will act like craftsmen who take good care that their products acquire a certain 'order and structure' (504A7 *τάξεως καὶ κόσμου*), and like doctors who procure *τάξις* and *κόσμος* in the body, i.e. health and strength (504B7-9). The analogous order in the soul, he suggests, is *δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ σωφροσύνη* (504D3).

The analogy is shrewdly chosen, and *σωφροσύνη* is gradually introduced only so that it seems only natural that Callicles gets 'trapped'. The association of *τάξις* with *σωφροσύνη* in the sense of self-control is not particularly strong in ordinary language use,<sup>33</sup> and thus it is no surprise that *τάξις* is the first term to be introduced (503E6) and that its introduction does not alarm Callicles. The association of *κόσμος* with *σωφροσύνη* is rather stronger: *κώφρων* in the use of 'in control of one's desires has *κόσμος* as an associated term, and in the context of the dia-

<sup>31</sup> Kahn (1996) 136-7, draws attention to the fact that, as with Gorgias and Polos, it is a sense of shame that precipitates Callicles' defeat. In fact, Callicles does not feel he can indiscriminately accept *all* kinds of pleasure, and this allows for the introduction of the notion of rational deliberation: after all, one will have to be able to decide which pleasures to pursue, and which to reject.

<sup>32</sup> The thought of *σωφροσύνη* has been kept alive, of course, by the passage in which unrestricted gratification of desires is compared to filling leaky jars (493D-494A), and the use of *τοῦ τε κώφρονος καὶ τοῦ ἀκολάστου* at 493D7 signifies as much.

<sup>33</sup> Isoc. 12.115 associates *σωφροσύνη* and *εὐταξία* in the context of good order in battle. That seems to be, outside philosophy, the natural non-figurative application of *εὐταξία* (given its association with *τάξις*). Cf. Th. 6.72.4, X. M. 3.3.14, Isoc. 8.102 etc.

logue, *σωφροσύνη* and *κόσμος* are made to share the antonym *ἀκοσμία*.<sup>34</sup> Thus, the term *κόσμος* is introduced later (504A7) than *τάξις*, and its introduction is carefully prepared by the relatively unobtrusive phrase *κεκοσμημένον πρᾶγμα* (504A1).

When Socrates uses the notion of 'order in the soul' to establish his earlier suggestion that it is good to be punished for one's vices (505B11-12), Callicles refuses to answer and suggests that Socrates should continue the discussion by questioning and answering himself. This provides Socrates with the opportunity for a more formal and clearer restatement of the preceding argument: the pleasant and the good are not the same (506C6); the good, and thus, *ἀρετή*, prevails over pleasure (506D9); *ἀρετή* implies *τάξις* (506D7) and *κόσμος* in the soul (506E2; note again the precedence of the less obtrusive term); a soul with *κόσμος* is *κοσμία* (506E6), and hence also *σώφρων* (507A1).

Thus, the notion of *τάξις* and *κόσμος* are invoked to demonstrate that *ἀρετή* entails *σωφροσύνη*. Callicles' original complete rejection of *σωφροσύνη* has now been refuted in as far as *σωφροσύνη* is not to be entirely rejected. It is to be accepted in as far as the *ἄνδρελος* needs a kind of 'order' in the soul that is closely akin to the 'prudential' type of *σωφροσύνη*. And since neither Socrates nor Callicles envisages the possibility that *σωφροσύνη* is used in more than one way, this seems to imply that the virtue has to be entirely accepted.

Socrates now proceeds to infer, with remarkable ease, that since a *σώφρων* will do what is due to gods and men (507A7-8 *ὁ γε σώφρων τὰ προσήκοντα πράττει ἂν καὶ περὶ θεοὺς καὶ περὶ ἀνθρώπους*), he will necessarily also be 'just' and 'correct in religious matters' (507B3-4 *ἀνάγκη δίκαιον καὶ ὅσιον εἶναι*). Here, Socrates activates two additional uses of *σώφρων*: the use in which the term applies to those who avoid injustice (my use 15) and that in which they avoid offending the gods (my use 17). This is the formal refutation of Callicles' initial rejection of *δικαιοσύνη* as a true ingredient of *ἀρετή*. Moreover, on the basis of the notion that the *σώφρων* will persevere in pursuing and avoiding the right things, Socrates now establishes that the *σώφρων* will be steadfast (507B8 (*σώφρονος ἀνδρός ἐστιν*) *καρ-*

<sup>34</sup> Pl. *Grg.* 508A4, cf. North (1966) 162n.21.



τερεῖν ὅπου δέι). Hence, he will necessarily also be ἀνδρεῖος, and, in fact, fully and completely ἀγαθός (507C2). This corrects Callicles' earlier suggestion that σωφροσύνη is something that people praise in order to conceal their own ἀνανδρία.

Herewith, a refutation is achieved of Callicles' thesis that δικαιοσύνη and σωφροσύνη are detrimental to the good of the man who possesses the competitive qualities. In order to be a successful Calliclean strong man, one needs to be ὡφρων and indeed possess all the virtues. Thus, it is asserted that the virtues are co-existent. The stronger claim of strict unity between these virtues that we have observed in *Laches* and *Protagoras*, is not made explicitly here, although the virtues still seem to spring from one and the same 'order' (τάξις) in the soul. More importantly, it is no longer σοφία which offers the unifying factor between the virtues, and *Gorgias* avoids Socrates' reduction of all virtue to knowledge. Instead, σωφροσύνη with its multiple uses now provides Socrates with a powerful tool to vindicate the *compatibility* of the virtues, without having to identify them all with knowledge. This unifying function of σωφροσύνη anticipates aspects of the *Republic*, where one function of σωφροσύνη is to ensure the 'harmony' between different classes of citizens with their specific qualities.

Thus, *Gorgias* offers an impressive argumentation that ἀνδρεία and σωφροσύνη can be combined. The question remains *how* they can be combined. On a theoretical level, *Gorgias* offers some general hints in comparing the order (τάξις) in the soul to the health of the body and the 'order' in the *kosmos*.<sup>35</sup> But the dialogue does not explore how people acquire both σωφροσύνη and ἀνδρεία, even though the qualities might seem to belong to very different temperaments. This is a topic to which Plato turns in two later texts, *Republic* and *Statesman*, and it is to these that we will now turn our attention.

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<sup>35</sup> On the weakness of the analogy between soul and natural order, and the rejection of similar analogies in *Chrm.* 166B7-C3, see Kahn (1996) 143.

6. *ᾠφροσύνη and ἀνδρεία* : Republic and Politicus

In the fourth book of *Republic*, Plato will finally offer his technical definitions of the main virtues, and these will include a definition of *ᾠφροσύνη* to which we will return later (section 9). Earlier on, in the long section on the education of the state's military class, some thought is again devoted to the problem of the combination and reconciliation of the very different qualities of *ἀνδρεία* and *ᾠφροσύνη*. The issue is now no longer a theoretical one, of establishing the 'unity' (*Laches*, *Protagoras*) or 'co-existence' (*Gorgias*) of the virtues; in fact, *Republic* fully allows for people who have some virtues but lack others (especially *σοφία*, and, for the 'lower' classes, *ἀνδρεία*). In *Republic*, the issue is an eminently practical one: the search is for soldiers who are both gentle and spirited (375C6-7, ἅμα πρᾶιον καὶ θυμοειδές), for they must be gentle to their own countrymen, and spirited against their enemies. This means that they are to possess the very different qualities of *ἀνδρεία* and *ᾠφροσύνη*, and the search is for a method of education in poetry and musical education (*μουσική*) and gymnastics that will be able to further these qualities.

For poetry, this means that verses describing the fear of death, or the mourning of the dead are to be banned, as these are detrimental to the soldiers' *ἀνδρεία* (386A-388D). Similarly, verses that are detrimental to *ᾠφροσύνη* are equally to be banned. This assumption triggers an allegedly non-technical 'popular' definition of *ᾠφροσύνη*:

*ᾠφροσύνης δὲ ὡς πληθύνει οὐ τὰ τοιάδε μέγιστα, ἀρχόντων μὲν ὑπηκόους εἶναι, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἄρχοντας τῶν περὶ πότους καὶ ἀφροδίτια καὶ περὶ ἐδωδάς ἡδονῶν; Ἐμοιγε δοκεῖ. (Pl. R. 389D9-E3)*

(Socrates) Of *ᾠφροσύνη* as conceived by most people, is not this the essence, that they are obedient to those who rule, but rule themselves over their desires for alcohol, sex and food? — (Glauco) I think so.

This 'popular' conception of *ᾠφροσύνη* combines two common uses of *ᾠφροσύνη*: that of 'control of desires' (my use 6) and of 'obedience to one's superiors' (my use 14). Plato returns to the 'authoritarian' type of *ᾠφροσύνη* as 'obedience'. The combina-

tion of these two elements is of course tailor-made for the conditions that the military servants of the state are to fulfil: they must have the self-control to obey their superiors and persevere in the execution of their tasks without distraction. Hence, the type of *σωφροσύνη* that is to be combined with *ἀνδρεία* is rather different from the ‘prudent’ *τάξις* from *Gorgias*. The emphasis is now firmly on the *σωφροσύνη* of sub-ordinates, and this *σωφροσύνη* has little to do with rational deliberation, and everything with obedience.

For poetry, the furthering of *σωφροσύνη* means that verses containing references to insubordination (such as in Achilles’ quarrel with Agamemnon in the first book of the *Iliad*, 389E13) or luxury (such as in Odysseus’ words of gratefulness for the lavish welcome given by Alcinous in *Od.* 9.8-10, 390A10-B2) are to be banned, whereas verses describing obedience or endurance are to be encouraged.

But the most important point made in the section on the education of the soldiers comes toward the end of the passage. Here, Socrates insists that music and gymnastics must be combined in the education of the soldiers throughout their careers. For the qualities that the soldiers need, the ‘spirited’ (*τὸ θυμοειδές*) and the calm (*τὸ ἡμερον*) both lead to excess if they are stimulated by a one-sided training. Only when the two qualities are mixed in the right proportion do they deserve the names of *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη*.

— Οὐκ ἐννοεῖς, εἶπον, ὥς διατίθενται αὐτὴν τὴν διάνοιαν  
οἱ ἂν γυμναστικῇ μὲν διὰ βίου ὁμιλήσωσιν, μουσικῇ δὲ μὴ  
ἄψωνται; ἢ αὖ ὅσοι ἂν τούναντίον διατεθῶσιν; 10

— Τίνος δέ, ἦ δ’ ὅς, πέρι λέγεις;

— Ἀγριότητός τε καὶ σκληρότητος, καὶ αὖ μαλακίας τε καὶ  
ἡμερότητος, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ— d

— Ἐγώ γε, ἔφη, ὅτι οἱ μὲν γυμναστικῇ ἀκράτῳι χρησάμενοι  
ἀγριώτεροι τοῦ δέοντος ἀποβαίνουσιν, οἱ δὲ μουσικῇ μαλα-  
κώτεροι αὖ γίνονται ἢ ὥς κάλλιον αὐτοῖς. 5

— Καὶ μήν, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, τό γε ἄγριον τὸ θυμοειδές ἂν τῇ  
φύσει παρέχοιτο, καὶ ὀρθῶς μὲν τραφὲν ἀνδρεῖον ἂν εἴη,  
μᾶλλον δ’ ἐπιταθὲν τοῦ δέοντος σκληρόν τε καὶ χαλεπὸν  
γίγνοιτ’ αὖν, ὥς τὸ εἶκος.

— Δοκεῖ μοι, ἔφη. 10

— Τί δέ; τὸ ἡμερον οὐχ ἡ φιλόσοφος ἂν ἔχοι φύσις, καὶ  
μᾶλλον μὲν ἀνεθέντος αὐτοῦ μαλακώτερον εἴη τοῦ δέοντος, e

καλῶς δὲ τραφέντος ἡμερόν τε καὶ κόσμιον;  
 — Ἔστι ταῦτα.  
 — Δεῖν δέ γέ φαμεν τοὺς φύλακας ἀμφοτέρω ἔχειν τούτῳ τὸ  
 φύσει. 5  
 — Δεῖ γάρ.  
 — Οὐκοῦν ἡρμόσθαι δεῖ αὐτὰς πρὸς ἀλλήλας;  
 — Πῶς δ' οὐ;  
 — Καὶ τοῦ μὲν ἡρμοςμένον *σώφρων* τε καὶ ἀνδρεία ἢ ψυχή; 411  
 — Πάνυ γε.  
 — Τοῦ δὲ ἀναρμόστου δειλὴ καὶ ἄγροικος;  
 — Καὶ μάλα.  
 (Pl. R. 410E5-411A4)

(Socrates) Have you not observed what kind of mentality people acquire if they practice gymnastics all their lives, and completely ignore music? Or people of the opposite disposition? — (Glauco) What are you talking about? — (Socrates) Lack of civilisation and ruthlessness on the one hand, and weakness and softness on the other. — (Glauco) Yes, I noticed. Those who practise nothing but gymnastics end up rather too uncivilised, and those who only practise music become weaker than is good for them. — (Socrates) Now this lack of civilisation might well be caused by their being spirited: if their spirited quality is trained in the right way, it will become courageous, but if it is strained further than it should be, it may well become hard and harsh, it would seem. — (Glauco) I think so. — (Socrates) And how about this? Is calmness not a quality of the philosophical temperament: calmness will be softer than it should if the man is relaxed too much, but will become calm and orderly if he is trained in the right manner? — (Glauco) That is true.  
 — (Socrates) Do we say that the guards must have both these natural qualities? — (Glauco) Yes indeed, they need both. — (Socrates) Then these must be in accord with each other, must they not? — (Glauco) Of course. — (Socrates) And the man who is in accord has a soul that is *σώφρων* and courageous? — Certainly. — (Socrates) And the man who is in discord has one that is weak or brutish? — (Glauco) Very much so.

Here we have an explicit statement that both the quiet behaviour typically associated with *σωφροσύνη* and the assertive behaviour associated with *ἀνδρεία* only qualify as virtuous if they are counter-balanced with their opposites. Exclusive emphasis on *μουσική* leads to a display of restraint even in situations in which it is not appropriate. Such people seem excessively restrained, and are not *σώφρονες* but 'soft'. By contrast, exclusive emphasis

on gymnastics is said to produce people who are only aggressive and competitive on each and every occasion. They seem not courageous but brutish. As in the famous digression on *στάσις* in Thucydides (see chapter 7.3.4), the valuation of behaviour is here acknowledged to be a scalar phenomenon: to the degree that restraint is commendable, it qualifies for the name of *σωφροσύνη*, whenever it is inappropriate, it becomes ‘too much’ and shades over into softness. And the same goes for *ἀνδρεία* and brutish behaviour. One-sided training, Socrates suggests, will teach people to display only one type of behaviour, whether appropriate or not. The name of virtue applies only when people are subjected to both types of training, so that they can display both types of behaviour at the right times.

In this passage, *ώφρων* is associated with two groups of terms that are used to design the ‘softness’ of excessive restraint: *μαλακία/μαλακός* and *ήμερότης/ήμερος*. Unsurprisingly, the two are not usually associated with *σωφροσύνη*. *μαλακία* and *μαλακός* seem to be unequivocally negative terms in common language use.<sup>36</sup> By contrast, *ήμερότης* and *ήμερος* are perhaps less unequivocally negative: in 410E3 at least, *ήμερος* is associated with the positive term *κόσμιος* to describe the character with the right degree of ‘tameness’; but this positive association between *ήμερότης* and *σωφροσύνη* is not found outside Plato.<sup>37</sup> The term *ἡρμοσμένος*, ‘regulated’, ‘tuned’, used to describe the moderate qualities of the well-trained soul, recalls the metaphor of *τάξις* (‘order’) or *ἀρμονία* (‘harmony’) in the soul from *Gorgias*; the term is not elsewhere found in association with either *ώφρων* or *ἀνδρείος*.

<sup>36</sup> X. *Smp.* 8.8 names *μαλακία* as a characteristic of a bad *έρώμενος*, and in X. *Apol.* 19 becoming *μαλακός* is named as one of the possible results of Socrates’ putative bad influence. Arist. *EN* 1145b10 names *μαλακία* as a ground for disgrace. I have found some associations of *μαλακός* and *ώφρων*, but only in Plato: in *Pol.* 307A, C, predilection for *μαλακά* features among the characteristics of the ‘quiet’ temperament; in *Lg.* 734A1, the desires of the *ώφρων* life are called *μαλακαί*.

<sup>37</sup> In *Phd.* 82B people who possess the non-philosophical, ‘civic’ type of *σωφροσύνη* are compared to ‘tame’ animals like bees, wasps or ants. In *Tht.* 210C3, Theaitetos will be ‘meeker’ (*ἡμερώτερος*) to his fellow-men, if he proves *ώφρων* enough to be aware of the limits of his own knowledge. In *Plt.* 309E1, *ἡμεροῦσθαι* is used for the ‘taming’ of the courageous spirit; in *R.* 591B3, the same verb is used to describe the effects of punishment for injustice.

What Plato proposes here, is — in a way — a strict, and restrictive, use of language: the virtue terms apply to the associated types of behaviour if and only if that type of behaviour is appropriate to the situation at hand. Thus, restraint only qualifies as *σωφροσύνη* if it is supplemented by an amount of the ‘spirited’ behaviour typically associated with *ἀνδρεία*, and *vice versa*. Plato returns to this problem of ‘mixing’ the two types of behaviour in *Politicus* 306A12-311C8. In that passage, the ‘assertive’ and ‘quiet’ temperaments are not so much the result of one-sided education, rather, they are natural inclinations of character. Hence, the main danger to the state is that there are too many people of either character. If there are too many ‘quiet’ people, the state will be unable to defend itself if necessary, and if there are too many who incline to *ἀνδρεία*-like aggression, the state will be involved in unnecessary wars (307E-308A). Therefore, the ‘mix’ that will cure this imbalance is not a mix of different types of education, but rather a matter of eugenetics: the statesmen will encourage marriages between people of different temperaments, and see to it that both qualities are ‘woven into the fabric’ of the state.

What makes the passage puzzling for the reader of *Republic*, is that in *Politicus*, Plato is not so restrictive in his use of language as in the third book of *Republic*. The stranger does not withhold the terms *σωφρων/ἀνδρεία φύσις* or *σωφρον/ἀνδρείον ἦθος* from these one-sided temperaments as Socrates took care to do in *Republic*. Hence, the stranger even has to concede — with evident hesitation — that ‘*ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη* are in a way very much in a state of enmity and disturbance vis-à-vis each other in many beings’ (306B9-10 *ὥς ἐστὸν κατὰ δὴ τινα τρόπον εἶ μάλα πρὸς ἀλλήλας ἔχθραν καὶ στάειν ἐναντίαν ἔχοντε ἐν πολλοῖς τῶν ὄντων*). Thus, the passage might at first sight seem to contradict the *Republic* and assert the incompatibility of *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη*, whereas in fact, it seeks to establish a similar ‘mix’ of temperaments by different means.

### 7. Polysemous *σωφροσύνη* and the 'Unity' of Virtue: Conclusion

In the dialogues that we have been looking at so far, we have seen how Plato uses the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* in argumentative passages to establish links with several other virtues.

In *Protagoras*, 'prudential' *σωφροσύνη* is linked to *σοφία* and this prudential *σωφροσύνη* is re-interpreted in other-regarding terms and then linked with *δικαιοσύνη*. In *Protagoras*, this is all part of a large scale manoeuvre to suggest the 'unity' of the virtues (see section 3 on the issue of 'unity') and undermine the expert Protagoras' claims that the virtues are distinct.

In *Laches*, Plato briefly hints how *σωφροσύνη* can be connected with, or in that passage rather subsumed under, *ἀνδρεία*. As in *Protagoras*, the particular virtues are ultimately identified with the whole of virtue and defined in terms of *σοφία* or 'knowledge'.

A link between *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* is much more elaborately established in *Gorgias*. In that dialogue, Socrates faces an attack on *δικαιοσύνη* by the 'immoralist' Callicles, who advocates a self-gratification that is compatible with *ἀνδρεία* and *φρόνησις* but incompatible with *δικαιοσύνη*. Here, the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* is exploited to establish a link between *ἀνδρεία* and *δικαιοσύνη* and bridge the gap between self-gratification and other-regarding morality. Here, the *demonstrandum* is not complete 'unity' of the virtues, but rather the compatibility and co-existence of *ἀνδρεία*/*φρόνησις* with *δικαιοσύνη*. Socrates has Callicles reject *σωφροσύνη* in the use of 'control of desires' and later has him accept that the courageous strong man needs a measure of prudence. When Callicles now has to accept *σωφροσύνη* (in the use of 'prudence'), he seems caught in contradiction, and is forced to admit also the other-regarding qualities of *δικαιοσύνη* and *οσιότης* that are closely associated with some (other) uses of *σωφροσύνη*. Thus, the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* serves to bridge the conceptual gap between *ἀνδρεία* and *δικαιοσύνη* and takes a central position in a 'network' of virtues.

In *Republic* and *Politicus*, Plato turns to the 'practical' problems connected with *ἀνδρεία* and *σωφροσύνη*, and specifically to the question of how the very different temperaments and types of

behaviour typically associated with the two virtues are to be mixed in such a way that both the military self-defence and the inner peaceful stability of the city state are guaranteed as much as possible. In *Republic*, the answer is sought in a 'mixed' education, in which *μουσική* and gymnastics are combined to provide the soldiers with a temperament both spirited and calm, *Politicus* adopts a demographic perspective, and envisages a balanced mix between people of different natural inclinations.

#### 8. *The Definition of σωφροσύνη: Charmides*

In the next sections, we will turn to dialogues in which Plato establishes a technical definition of *σωφροσύνη*. Here, instead of choosing freely from various uses of the term, Plato rather tends to reduce *σωφροσύνη* to a number of its prototypical manifestations. *Charmides* (section 8) explores, and dismisses, a wealth of expressions associated with various uses of the terms. Specifically, the dialogue gives much attention to the problems of identifying the 'cognitive' aspects of *σωφροσύνη* with knowledge, and by implication insists on a distinction between *σωφροσύνη* and *σοφία*. By contrast, the central notion of 'control of desire' is only hinted at in the dramatic discussion; it is not discussed at all, but to that extent remains unchallenged. In *Republic*, a definition of *σωφροσύνη* is reached that is Plato's own elaboration on two prototypical manifestations of *σωφροσύνη*, the control of desires of the individual citizen and the lawfulness of the citizens of the *πόλις* as a collective (section 9). *Republic* also establishes a technical distinction between *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*, qualities that in some uses are closely connected.

Belonging to the group of so-called aporetic dialogues, *Charmides* is an intriguing and perplexing work. Starting as a quest for a definition of *σωφροσύνη*, it seems to remove itself far from conventional notions of *σωφροσύνη* when Socrates and Critias embark on a very complicated epistemological discussion. Moreover, while it offers four definitions of the virtue that sound familiar and intuitively 'right', two of them are rejected



straight away, and the others are extensively modified and accepted only hypothetically. The dialogue ends in *ἀπορία* when it appears impossible to give a definition of *σωφροσύνη* in terms of knowledge and at the same time keep clear what the distinctive value of *σωφροσύνη* might be. This may appear to be a disappointing work, then, lacking both unity and satisfying results.

On second thoughts, however, the dialogue may not turn out to be so perplexing and frustrating after all. The dialectical discussion on *σωφροσύνη* touches on many terms and expressions conventionally associated with some uses of *σωφροσύνη* and points to the problems that arise when these notions are taken as the *single* definition of *σωφροσύνη*. In this connection, the dialogue deals with the following associations of *σωφροσύνη*:

(1) (Charmides) *τὸ κοσμίως πάντα πράττειν καὶ ἡσυχῇ*, ‘doing everything in an orderly manner and quietly’ = *ἡσυχία*, cf. the uses to commend ‘boyish’ quietness in my group 13 (Pl. *Chrm.* 159B).

(2) (Charmides) *δοκεῖ ... αἰσχύνεσθαι ποιεῖν ἢ σωφροσύνη καὶ αἰσχυντηλὸν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ εἶναι ὅπερ αἰδῶς ἢ σωφροσύνη*, ‘it seems ... that *σωφροσύνη* causes a feeling of shame and makes a man liable to feel shame, and that it is in fact the same as *αἰδῶς*.’ = *αἰδῶς*, cf. the sense of decency from the uses in my group 9 (Pl. *Chrm.* 160E).

(3) (attributed to Critias) *τὸ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν*, ‘doing one’s own things’, cf. the ‘quiet’ behaviour of the adult citizen, my group of uses no. 10, and cf. the definition of *δικαιοσύνη* in *Republic* (section 9). ‘ (Pl. *Chrm.* 161B)

(3a) *τὴν τῶν ἀγαθῶν πράξιν*, ‘doing good things’ (163E10).

(4) ( Critias) *τὸ γινώσκειν ἑαυτόν*, ‘knowing oneself’. (Pl. *Chrm.* 164D).

(4a) *ἐπιστήμη ... ἑαυτοῦ*, ‘knowledge of oneself’ (165C5-7).

(4b) *τῶν τε ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη ... καὶ αὐτὴ ἑαυτῆς*, ‘knowledge of other fields of knowledge and of knowledge itself’ (166C2-3).

(4c) τὸ εἰδέναι ἃ τε οἶδεν καὶ ἃ μὴ οἶδεν, 'to know what one does and does not know' (167A6-7), .

(4d) εἰδέναι ... ὅτι οἶδεν καὶ ὅτι οὐκ οἶδεν, 'to know that one does and does not know' (170D2-3)

In the discussion of the concept of 'self-knowledge', specific attention is paid to the problems that arise when *σωφροσύνη* is identified with some kind of knowledge and, thus, by implication, with *σοφία*. What remains unchallenged throughout the dialogue, is the prototypical use of 'control of desires', which is not discussed at all, but activated in the dramatic setting of the dialogue. Thus, the dialogue might seem to suggest *a negativo* that we are to regard this prototypical use as the core of the matter, and this will indeed be the use that is taken as a point of departure in further discussions of *σωφροσύνη* in *Republic*.

Another feature that seems important and recurs throughout the dialogue, is the *ἥθος* of the *κώφρων* man, as embodied in a superficial and ultimately unconvincing manner in the young Charmides and his elitist uncle Critias, and in a far more serious manner in Socrates. The portrayal of Socrates as the true *κώφρων* (and, consequently, as the most serious benefactor of the *πόλις*) is an important unifying factor in what might otherwise seem a text with strong centrifugal tendencies.

The relevance of *ἥθος* to the introductory scene in the *παλαιστρα* is obvious, and has not been missed.<sup>38</sup> Right at the start, attention is drawn to Socrates' bravery in the battle at Potteideia (432 BC) and also to his temperamental *σωφροσύνη*: he desires to see the boy 'stripped' in a mental rather than physical sense (154E5 τί οὖν ... οὐκ ἀπεδύσαμεν αὐτοῦ αὐτὸ τοῦτο, 'Why don't we strip him of that?', sc. τοῦ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν εἶναι), and, though he is strongly moved when the boy looks him in the eyes (155C8) and even more when he gets a glance inside the boy's *himation* (155D3-4), he still manages to control himself and start a serious discussion. The suggestion of the passage is,

<sup>38</sup> See Tuckey (1951) 19, North (1966) 154, Santas (1973) 106, Irwin (1995) 39, Kahn (1997) 187-8, Stalley (2000) 265-6.

of course, that Socrates possesses *σωφροσύνη* in the prototypical use of control of his desires.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, we are at the start of the dialogue immediately reminded of the prototypical use of *σωφροσύνη*, a use that everybody would instantly think of, and that is clearly recognisable even if the term itself is not used. The reminder is timely, for this sense is completely ignored in the dialectical section that follows. Here, the attention of Socrates and his interlocutors soon turn to other aspects of the virtue.

### 8.1. *The first definition: ἡσυχία*

The conversation starts with the question whether Socrates knows a cure for Charmides' headaches. This medical question allows Socrates to draw a parallel between physical and mental health, and to suggest that the boy can only be truly cured if he possesses mental health in the sense of *σωφροσύνη* as well (157B). There is an analogy here between physical health and mental *σωφροσύνη* that recalls the insistence on *τάξις* in *Gorgias* (and, of course, the etymology of *σωφροσύνη* as *soundness* of mind); here, it is accepted readily.<sup>40</sup>

Critias states that Charmides is indeed more *ώφρων* than anyone else of his age (157D3), and Charmides spontaneously demonstrates his *σωφροσύνη* by blushing (158C5). Besides, the boy feels that he can neither immodestly confirm, nor dishonestly deny, that he has the virtue. Here, then, the boy demonstrates *σωφροσύνη* in yet another sense: that of youthful bashfulness and modesty.

Socrates suggests that the test of the boy's *σωφροσύνη* would be to see if he knows what it is: 'for it is clear that if there is *σωφροσύνη* in you, you must have some intimation about it'

<sup>39</sup> The combined themes of Socrates' *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* are both even more powerfully stated by Alcibiades in *Symposium*.

<sup>40</sup> The same analogy between physical and psychic 'health' is suggested by the fact that the discussion on *σωφροσύνη* is set in the *παιδεία*, a place for the display of physical prowess and health (North (1966) 153). Besides, the *παιδεία* has associations with *σωφροσύνη* all of its own, because of its vital function in the traditional education of the elite. Thus, it plays an important part in Strong's description of the old education from the times of *σωφροσύνη* (Ar. Nu. 973-8, 1002, 1006).

(158E7-159A1 δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι εἴ σοι πάρεστιν σωφροσύνη, ἔχεις τι περὶ αὐτῆς δοξάζειν). The point here is that someone who possesses a certain quality, must in some way sense what the quality is and what it effects. To have a virtue thus implies that one ‘knows’, however intuitively, what that virtue is.<sup>41</sup> The notion that virtue entails self-knowledge, of paramount importance later on in the dialogue, is foreshadowed here in a subtle way.

Charmides at first still hesitates to answer (159B1) but then offers his first definition of σωφροσύνη:

ἔπειτα μέντοι εἶπεν ὅτι οἱ δοκοῖ σωφροσύνη εἶναι τὸ κοσμίως πάντα πράττειν καὶ ἡσυχῇ, ἐν τε ταῖς ὁδοῖς βαδίζειν καὶ διαλέγεσθαι, καὶ τὰλλα πάντα ὡσαυτῶς ποιεῖν καὶ μοι δοκεῖ, ἔφη, συλλήβδην ἡσυχιότης τις εἶναι ὃ ἐρωτᾷς.

(Pl. *Chrm.* 159B2-6)

After a while, however, he said that he had the impression that σωφροσύνη was doing everything in an orderly fashion and quietly, walking in the streets and also talking, and doing everything else in the same manner. ‘And I think’, he said, ‘that the thing you ask for is, in short, some kind of quietness’.

This first definition is, for someone with the frame of reference of a Charmides, an obvious and correct answer to Socrates’ question, in that its focus is on those types of behaviour that are commonly taken as typical manifestations of σωφροσύνη in boys; and in fact it strongly resembles the classroom discipline extolled by the old-fashioned teacher in Aristophanes’ *Clouds* (see chapter 8.2). As such, the definition accounts for one group of prototypical manifestations of σωφροσύνη, the orderliness expected from boys (my use 14). It also shows that Charmides is capable of discussion at a certain level of abstraction, for this ‘orderliness and quietness’ is in fact a quality that manifests itself in different manners in a number of activities: as such, it is the common denominator of a number of examples of youthful σωφροσύνη. Thus, this definition is on the level of Laches’ *sec-*

<sup>41</sup> In the set-up of *Chrm.*, the search for the definition of σωφροσύνη is no end in itself; rather, it serves as a preliminary to see whether Charmides is indeed *σώφρων* so that he does not need an incantation to cure his headache. Similarly, in *Laches*, the definition of ἀνδρεία is a preliminary to the answer to Lysimachos’ question about the use of hoplomachy. See Kahn (1996) 153-4.

and definition of ἀνδρεία in the dialogue of that name.<sup>42</sup> At the same time, it is obvious that, for Socrates, the definition is highly deficient as a full definition: it does not even cover the prototypical manifestations of the virtue in adults, let alone less typical manifestations; and its focus is on outward appearances, not on the cognitive/emotional state of which Charmides himself has just given a demonstration, and on the self-awareness of that state of which Socrates has just demanded an account.<sup>43</sup>

Socrates dismisses the identification of σωφροσύνη with school boy discipline by pointing out that σωφροσύνη is among the good things, but ἡσυχιότης is sometimes inferior to speed, ergo the two cannot be the same (159C-160D). His counter-examples are well chosen to appeal to the boy's limited frame of reference, for they draw on music lessons, athletic training, and learning and teaching and similar mental pursuits. And while the argument itself may seem simplistic,<sup>44</sup> it makes the very important point, again crucial to the later stages of the discussion, that whereas ἡσυχιότης is (for males at least) not 'good' independent of setting and context, σωφροσύνη is one of those values that are invariably and universally good,<sup>45</sup> and that any

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<sup>42</sup> For Laches' first definition is in fact really a (prototypical) *example* of ἀνδρεία, see section 4 above.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Tuckey (1958) 19, North (1966) 155-6, Schmid (1998) 22-4, Stalley (2000) 266. That is not to say that the definition is intrinsically inadequate, except that it does not meet with the demands just formulated by Socrates. As we have seen throughout the central chapters of this book, most uses of σωφροσύνη focus on its characteristic behaviour rather than on a mental state.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Schmid (1998) 24.

<sup>45</sup> Thus, any suggestion that σωφροσύνη is not a good thing, or is not appropriate in a given situation, is either a joke or plainly outrageous, for the use of the positive value term is incongruous when the situation requires a very different types of behaviour. This is why the use of ἀνδρεία and σωφροσύνη in *Politicus* is difficult, for there the positive terms are also applied to *excesses* of assertive and quiet behaviour (see section 6).

This incongruity is what makes Weak's position in *Clouds* hilariously immoral (see chapter 8.2), and Callicles' rejection of σωφροσύνη shockingly so (see section 5). Comically incongruous is also Iris' remark to Lyssa (whose function is to incite Heracles' madness) that she is not there in order to be *σώφρων* (i.e. in order to moralise on the immorality of Hera's actions against Heracles, E. *Her.* 857, see chapter 6.2).

definition that would lead one to think otherwise cannot be accepted without reservations.<sup>46</sup>

## 8.2. *The second definition: αἰδώς*

Charmides is now invited to practice some introspection (160D6 εἰς σεαυτὸν ἐμβλέψας) and then to state ‘well and courageously’ (D8-E1 εὖ καὶ ἀνδρείως) what he really thinks on the matter. His second definition is indeed rather more ‘inward-looking’ than the first and betrays a measure of self-awareness in that it reflects Charmides’ sense of shame:

δοκεῖ τοίνυν μοι, ἔφη, αἰσχύνεσθαι ποιεῖν ἢ σωφροσύνη καὶ αἰσχυντηλὸν τὸν ἀνθρώπου, καὶ εἶναι ὅπερ αἰδώς ἢ σωφροσύνη.  
(Pl. *Chrm.* 160E3-5)

‘Well then’, he said, ‘I think that σωφροσύνη causes one to feel shame and makes man liable to feel shame, and that σωφροσύνη is the same as αἰδώς.’

This second definition may be said to mark an advance in that it turns attention away from the outward manifestations of σωφροσύνη to the mental/emotional experience behind these manifestations; it is still tied to a boy’s frame of reference (in this case, the sense of decency in my group of uses no. 9) but perhaps less exclusively so, for αἰδώς relates to a more general sense of respect for propriety and can be associated with σωφροσύνη in rather more types of other-regarding behaviour.<sup>47</sup> But the definition still does not get to the heart of the matter, and it is refuted by Socrates on the objection that, like quietness, αἰδώς is not always a good thing either; Homer (*Od.* 17.347) is cited as a decisive and effective authority on the point.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Again, there is a clear parallel with the refutation of Laches’ *second* definition of ἀνδρεία as καρτερία, which also fails on the ground that καρτερία, unlike ἀνδρεία, is not always a good thing: *La.* 192D-193D.

<sup>47</sup> Thus, in *Prt.* 322C2, it is αἰδώς that is conducive to σωφροσύνη in the political sense of respect for the rights and claims of others. For Plato’s use of conventional uses of αἰδώς, cf. Cairns (1993) 371-8.

<sup>48</sup> Stalley (2000) 266 is not entirely right to suggest that ‘whether a sense of shame is appropriate depends on one’s social position’. It is true that αἰδώς will naturally spring from a perceived status difference (see, e.g. Cairns (1993)

### 8.3. *The third definition: τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν*

Charmides then remembers that he heard someone say that *σωφροσύνη* means τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν, ‘doing one’s own things’ (161B6), and offers this as a third definition. There is a strong and repeated suggestion that this definition stems from Critias (161B8, 162C4-6), even though Critias himself denies it (161C2), and this brings the ideal of the quiet, ἀπράγμων citizen in view (my use 10), an ideal that at the date of the dramatic setting of the dialogue reflects a conservative and elitist political ideology associated with *σωφροσύνη* (cf. chapters 7.3 on Thucydides and 8.2 on Aristophanes).<sup>49</sup> This adds an important motive to the thematic material associated with *σωφροσύνη* in the dialogue, for it will eventually be argued that the true *σώφρων* will indeed have a vital ‘political’ function in his supreme care for the well-being of the city, though the view on political *σωφροσύνη* offered by Socrates will in fact differ substantially from what Critias has to offer.

Socrates at first takes this phrase, τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν, in an obviously far too limited sense,<sup>50</sup> and observes that there are many people who do not just ‘do their own things’ and yet can be called *σώφρονες*: teachers and school children write other names as well their own, doctors heal others and artisans make things not just for themselves (161D-162A). He concludes that this definition is a kind of riddle, constructed by the anonymous expert to point out ‘that it is difficult to recognise what that ‘doing one’s own things’ actually is’ (162B5 ὡς δὲν χαλεπὸν τὸ τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν γινῶναι ὅτι ποτε ἔστιν).

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87-9), but when αἰδώς is said to be *inappropriate*, it is the special exigencies of a situation that make the difference. For the beggar of the Homeric example, it is his need for food; at *Od.* 3.14, Telemachus is told that he should overcome his αἰδώς for Menelaus (a natural reaction for a young man versus a great hero) in view of his need for information.

<sup>49</sup> On the connections of Socrates with Critias and Charmides, see Stone (1980), Krentz (1992), esp. 82-3, and Notomi (2000). On the choice of Critias and Charmides as discussion partners in the dialogue, see Kahn (1996) 185-7.

<sup>50</sup> His use of ἐπολυπραγμονεῖτε as a contrast term to ἐσωφρονεῖτε (161E11) gives a hint, however, that he is quite aware of the interpretation of *σωφροσύνη* in terms of ἀπραγμοσύνη that Critias obviously had in mind.

The remark makes two important points. First, it prepares us for the fact that τὰ ἐαυτοῦ πράττειν will eventually be relevant to *σωφροσύνη* in a more sophisticated way: the *ώφρων* will take care that everyone does ‘his own things’ in the sense of doing what one can do best (171D-E, a striking anticipation of the division of labour proposed as the definition of *δικαιοσύνη* in the *Republic*). Second, it subtly points to the problems connected with *σωφροσύνη* and ‘cognition’ (*γινῶναι*) that are a prominent theme in the later stages of the discussion. Thus, we are reminded of the connections between *σωφροσύνη* and the other virtues; but here these connections are questioned rather than exploited.

Critias now takes over from his nephew, and objects — in a show of semantic subtlety à la Prodicus, as Socrates does not fail to point out (163D3-4)<sup>51</sup> — that Socrates has understood the verb *πράττειν* in the sense of *ποιεῖν* (‘making’), a sense that is both mundane and too inclusive. On the authority of Hesiod, he suggest that it is τὰ ... καλῶς καὶ ὠφελίμως ποιούμενα (‘what is done well and in a useful way’) that comes in for the lofty name of *ἔργα* and that only such ‘doings’ can rightfully be called *πράξεις* (163C3-4). Again, two notions that will be crucial to the final stages of the discussion are introduced: first, that *σωφροσύνη* aims at the good, τὸ καλόν, and ultimately implies ‘understanding of good and bad’, second, that *σωφροσύνη* must be ‘useful’.

Socrates suspends his judgement on Critias’ modified definition that ‘it is not the man who does what is bad but the man who does what is good who is *ώφρων*’ (οὐκ ἄρα *σωφρονεῖ* ὁ τὰ κακὰ πράττων ἀλλ’ ὁ τὰγαθὰ, 163E4). Perhaps this is surprising, for this definition — while too inclusive from the point of view of ordinary semantics — would seem to suit Socrates’ notion that virtue is one and aims at the good.<sup>52</sup> In fact, however, Socrates goes on to refute Critias’ definition by pointing out an unacceptable consequence of the definition. A doctor may do

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *La.* 197D, where it is also Socrates’ second interlocutor, Nicias, who is the more sophisticated and ‘sophistic’ discussion partner.

<sup>52</sup> His resistance to premature acceptance of theses that he himself seems to believe, is a characteristic of Socrates’ philosophical ‘integrity’ that runs through the dialogue. One may compare his treatment of Nicias in *Laches*.



something useful or harmful without knowing so: ἐνίοτε ἄρα ... ὠφελίμως πράξας ἢ βλαβερῶς ὁ ἰατρὸς οὐ γινώσκει ἑαυτὸν ὡς ἔπραξεν, ‘sometimes, a doctor acts in a useful or damaging way, and does not know about himself in what way he acted’ (164B11-C1). On Critias’ definition this means that he is *κῶφρων* without knowing that he is (*κωφρονεῖ, ἀγνοεῖ δ’ ἑαυτὸν ὅτι κωφρονεῖ*, 164C6).

#### 8.4. *The fourth definition: Self-Knowledge*

Being *κῶφρων* without knowing that one is *κῶφρων* is a conception that Critias refuses to accept, and this prompts an entirely ‘new’ definition, well prepared in fact by the formulation of Socrates’ leading questions,<sup>53</sup> namely that *κωφροσύνη* is ‘understanding oneself’ or ‘knowing oneself’ (*τὸ γινώσκειν ἑαυτόν*, 164D4).

What Critias seems to mean with his definition of *κωφροσύνη* as ‘self-knowledge’ is probably that man should know his place and comply with human and divine authority (cf. especially the ‘submissive’ types of *κωφροσύνη* in my groups of uses nos. 14 and 17).<sup>54</sup> This compliance implies an aristocratic/authoritarian view of *κωφροσύνη* familiar from some characters in Aeschylus, and openly defied by Sophocles’ Ajax. As such, this new definition gives some hints about Critias’ own political inclinations and, by implication, a reminder of the excesses to which these led. But ‘know thyself’ can also be taken in a more strictly epistemological sense<sup>55</sup> — as it was probably done by Heraclitus who claimed that it was given to any man to know himself and be *κῶφρων*.<sup>56</sup> This second interpretation is now taken up by Socrates, and this prepares us for the introduction of the thoroughly Socratic notion that *κωφροσύνη* is a form of knowledge, and more specifically a form of knowledge that has to do with the awareness of

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Tuozzo (2000) 300. The earliest hint for an interpretation of *κωφροσύνη* in terms of self-knowledge is Socrates’ earlier suggestion to Charmides that *κωφροσύνη* should produce some kind of awareness of itself.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Tuckey (1958) 24.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Kahn (1996) 191.

<sup>56</sup> fr. 116 *ἀνθρώποισι πᾶσι μέτεστι γινώσκειν ἑωυτοὺς καὶ κωφρονεῖν*, ‘it is given to all people to know themselves and be *sôphrones*’.

what one does and does not know. Thus, this definition might seem to appeal to both Socrates and Critias, but when the latter strongly invites Socrates to accept the definition, Socrates declines — with a characteristic disclaimer of knowledge — and suggests further inquiry.

In discussing this fourth definition of *σωφροσύνη* as self-knowledge, Socrates suggests that it implies that *σωφροσύνη* is a form of ‘knowledge’ with a certain object (*ἐπιστήμη ... τις καὶ τινός* (165C5) and Critias specifies that the object is *ἐαυτοῦ*. This is a covert modification of the earlier definition of *σωφροσύνη* as *τὸ γιγνώσκειν ἑαυτόν* for the shift from *γιγνώσκειν* / *γνώσις* to *ἐπιστήμη* / *ἐπίστασθαι* effects that ‘self-knowledge’ cannot be taken to be some kind of generalised, non-technical ‘insight’ about oneself and one’s position in society (as the phrase might suggest in ordinary usage) but that it has to be a formal and technical body of knowledge on the analogy of a craft or science.<sup>57</sup> On the analogy of the crafts, Socrates asks Critias to identify a specific *product* of ‘knowledge of oneself’, but Critias protests that self-knowledge is not like ordinary productive crafts (165D-166A). Socrates then states that crafts have an object outside themselves, and invites Critias to name a similar object for self-knowledge. Again, Critias protests that self-knowledge is unlike the other crafts: it has no object outside itself, but is unique in being ‘knowledge of other types of knowledge and of knowledge itself’ (*ἡ δὲ μόνη τῶν τε ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτὴ ἑαυτῆς*, 166C2-3).<sup>58</sup> On this definition, *ἐπιστήμη ἑαυτοῦ* amounts to understanding what knowledge is and whether one — or someone else — has it or not.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Stalley (2000) 271; ‘The question is ... whether the kind of understanding which one may have of oneself can properly be assimilated to the expert’s knowledge of his subject.’

<sup>58</sup> It is significant that Socrates assures Critias that he is not interested in scoring points in the discussion, but really fears that he may think he knows what he does not know (166C7-D2): here we have yet another clear demonstration that Socrates cares about *σωφροσύνη* also in this sense of ‘self-knowledge’.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Stalley (2000) 271: ‘Plato makes it clear in this passage, that, whatever the original meaning of ‘knowing oneself’, the thesis under consideration is to be identified with the Socratic ideal of knowing what one does and does not know.’

The shift from ‘self-knowledge’ (ἐπιστήμη ... ἐαυτοῦ) to ἐπιστήμη ... αὐτὴ ἐαυτῆς may seem fallacious,<sup>60</sup> but it would seem to follow naturally from Socrates’ interpretation of the concept of self-knowledge. As we have seen earlier on, it is Socrates’ assumption that someone who is *σώφρων* will be aware of his *σωφροσύνη* and will be able to say what *σωφροσύνη* is (158E-159A). Given that, in Socratic terms, virtue is a kind of knowledge, this could be reformulated in a more general statement that ‘if one has ‘knowledge of *x*’, one will be aware of one’s ‘knowledge of *x*’, and be able to say what ‘knowledge of *x*’ is. On this reading, if one has self-knowledge, this self-knowledge will (among many other things that one may happen to know about oneself) include an awareness of this knowledge, and produce the ability to say what this knowledge is. Thus, on a Socratic reading, the interpretation of ‘self-knowledge’ as ‘knowledge what knowledge is and whether one has it, or not’, is not fallacious but at most a reduction of the inclusive notion of self-knowledge to its most salient feature.<sup>61</sup> This ‘Socratic’ reading of the Delphic instruction of *γῶθι καυτόν* seems entirely in accordance with Socrates’ interpretation of the oracle in *Apology* (21A), viz. that his supreme wisdom consists in the unusual awareness of his ignorance.<sup>62</sup>

To the new definition of *σωφροσύνη* as *τῶν τε ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη καὶ αὐτὴ ἐαυτῆς* (166C2-3), Socrates adds

<sup>60</sup> For a discussion, see Tuckey (1958) 33-7 and 107-8.

<sup>61</sup> Critias’ inclusion of the other *ἐπιστήμαι* in the definition of self-knowledge (*τῶν τε ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἐπιστήμη ἐστὶ καὶ αὐτὴ ἐαυτῆς*, 166C2-3), though criticised by Tuckey (1958) 31, seems to follow naturally from Socrates’ assumption that knowledge produces an awareness of itself. On this assumption, ‘self-knowledge’ cannot be entirely reduced to ‘knowledge of self-knowledge’, but must include awareness of whatever other types of knowledge one may happen to have.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Kahn (1996) 191. It is striking that Critias seems only too willing to give the adequate ‘Socratic’ answers (cf. Tuckey (1958) 24). Is this because he adheres to many Socratic formulations, even if he interprets them in a more traditional way? In any case, Socrates presents him with quite a number of leading questions. For instance, his invitation to Critias to name an object of self-knowledge that is different from knowledge itself (166B1-2) seems to imply that he holds that the earlier formulation *ἐπιστήμη ... ἐαυτοῦ* (165C7) does *not* specify such an object.

the notion that *σωφροσύνη*, if it is knowledge of knowledge, must also be knowledge of ignorance (*καὶ ἀνεπιστημοσύνης ἐπιστήμη ἂν εἴη*, 166E7). This easily leads to the conclusion that the typical Socratic activity of interrogating the expert and exposing his defective knowledge is, in fact, the proper function of ‘knowledge of knowledge’ and therewith of ‘self-knowledge’ and *σωφροσύνη*.<sup>63</sup> At the same time, we are far removed from traditional notions of *σωφροσύνη*. The plausibility of the identification of *σωφροσύνη* with self-knowledge is based on the fact that the traditional interpretation of *γνώθι σαυτόν* commends acceptance of the limitations of mortality and recognition of the superiority of divinity; this is indeed close to a traditional use of *σωφροσύνη* (use 17) to commend compliance with divine authority. When, however, *γνώθι σαυτόν* is reinterpreted in terms of Socratic self-knowledge, we are considerably removed from conventional interpretations of the virtue.<sup>64</sup> But given that the re-interpretation of *γνώθι σαυτόν* is not characterised as such, the reader may easily go along with the discussion, and accept that *σωφροσύνη* is indeed the Socratic expertise in assessing the knowledge and ignorance of oneself and others:

ὁ ἄρα σώφρων μόνος αὐτός τε ἑαυτὸν γινώσκει καὶ οἷός τε ἔσται ἐξετάσαι τί τε τυγχάνει εἰδῶς καὶ τί μή, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ὡσαύτως δυνατὸς ἔσται ἐπισκοπεῖν τί τις οἶδεν καὶ οἶεται, εἴπερ οἶδεν, καὶ τί αὖ οἶεται μὲν εἰδέναι, οἶδεν δ’ οὐ, τῶν δὲ ἄλλων οὐδεὶς· καὶ ἔστιν δὴ τοῦτο τὸ σωφρονεῖν τε καὶ σωφροσύνη καὶ τὸ ἑαυτὸν αὐτὸν γινώσκειν, τὸ εἰδέναι ἅ τε οἶδεν καὶ ἅ μὴ οἶδεν.  
(Pl. *Chrm.* 167A1-7)

So the *σώφρων* will be the only one who will know himself and will be able to enquire what he does and does not know; and with respect to other people he will in the same manner be able to judge what someone knows and thinks he knows, and see if he really knows it, and also what he thinks he knows, but does not really know; no one else will be able to

<sup>63</sup> It seems right to say that ‘temperance in the ordinary sense drops out of sight’ (Kahn (1996) 191). Still, there are some suggestions in the epistemological discussion that self-knowledge produces results that are commonly associated with *σωφροσύνη*, notably ‘doing one’s own things’ and successful management of one’s *οἶκος* and the *πόλις* (cf. the prudential uses in group 2).

<sup>64</sup> It will be clear that I am not convinced that the prominence of ‘Self-Knowledge’ in the subtitle of North (1966) is justified from the point of view of ordinary language use.

do so. And this is what being *σώφρων* and *σωφροσύνη* and knowing oneself amounts to, that one knows what one does and does not know.

Here we have a conclusive affirmation of what has been the drift of the discussion for some time now, namely that the essence of *σωφροσύνη* is the ability to perform something that looks remarkably like the Socratic method of *ἐλεγχος*, and that this ability is the true test of genuine *σωφροσύνη*.

Instead of accepting this apparently very satisfactory conclusion, Socrates confesses bewilderment, and goes on to show that there are complex and seemingly unaccountable difficulties involved in this notion of self-knowledge, thereby showing that it is no trivial and simple matter. First of all, *ἐπιστήμη* *ἐπιστήμη* is shown to be an utter anomaly in that, unlike other cognitive faculties, it has no object outside itself and no *δύναμις* with respect to anything outside itself (167B-169B). But even if one tentatively accepts that such an anomaly is possible, as Socrates generously does (thereby giving a hint that the notion may be correct even if it cannot at present be accounted for), it still means that it is difficult to see what the use of such knowledge would be. For it would be impossible to assess the validity of the knowledge of an expert in a certain field of expertise, without also having the specialised knowledge in question.<sup>65</sup> This means that *σωφροσύνη* is 'knowing that one does and does not know' rather than 'knowing what one does and does not know' (170D1-3) and the unpleasant consequence is that the *σώφρων* will not be able to assess the validity of the knowledge of a doctor or any other expert, because he lacks the specialist knowledge of the field in question.

Thus, the benefit of *σωφροσύνη* as self-knowledge proves elusive, and Socrates expresses annoyance at this, because he is assured that if *σωφροσύνη* really meant that one knows what one does and does not know, it would be greatly beneficial to the *πόλις*:

*ἀναμάρτητοι γὰρ ἂν τὸν βίον διεζῶμεν αὐτοί τε [καὶ] οἱ τὴν  
σωφροσύνην ἔχοντες καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες ὅσοι ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἤρχοντο.*

<sup>65</sup> On the assumption that branches of knowledge are firmly separate and do not overlap, see Stalley (2000) 271-2.

οὔτε γὰρ ἂν αὐτοὶ ἐπεχειροῦμεν πράττειν ἢ μὴ ἡπιστάμεθα, ἀλλ' ἐξευρίσκοντες τοὺς ἐπισταμένους ἐκείνοις ἂν παρεδίδομεν, οὔτε τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐπετρέπομεν, ὧν ἤρχομεν, ἄλλο τι πράττειν ἢ ὅτι πράττοντες ὀρθῶς ἔμελλον πράξειν—τοῦτο δ' ἦν ἂν, οὗ ἐπιστήμην εἶχον—καὶ οὕτω δὴ ὑπὸ σωφροσύνης οἰκία τε οἰκουμένη ἔμελλεν καλῶς οἰκεῖσθαι, πόλις τε πολιτευομένη, καὶ ἄλλο πᾶν οὗ σωφροσύνη ἄρχοι.  
(Pl. *Chrm.* 171D6-E7)

We would live our lives without making mistakes, both we ourselves who possess *σωφροσύνη* and all others who were ruled by us. For we would never undertake to do anything ourselves that we did not know how to do, but we would find the experts and leave it to them; and we would not order the others, whom we ruled, to do anything but what they were bound to do well — that is to say, the things of which they had knowledge. And in that way, under the influence of *sophrosynè*, a household would be managed in the right way, and a city would be governed well, and the same thing goes for anything in which *σωφροσύνη* had the lead.

Here, the notion of *τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν*, ‘doing one’s proper things’, is subtly reintroduced in the discussion as a direct result of the discussion of *σωφροσύνη* in the sense of self-knowledge, and it is now given a political significance that goes way beyond the aversion to democratic *πολυπραγμοσύνη* that Critias probably had in mind. ‘Doing one’s own job’ is of course the definition of *δικαιοσύνη* in the *Republic*. And if ‘true’ *σωφροσύνη* remains elusive at this stage in the *Charmides*, the present passage gives a clear hint of the directions that Platonic investigations of the virtue will take.<sup>66</sup>

The benefit of this ‘doing what belongs to one’ is that it makes for successful management of the household and the city. Here the ‘prudential’ aspects of *σωφροσύνη* (successful and circumspect management of one’s household and the *πόλις*, always traditionally taken as a sign of *σωφροσύνη* in the male *πολίτης*, cf. the uses from my group 2) come into view. They have not been directly addressed in the discussion, for most of the time, Plato has been more concerned with a defence of the

<sup>66</sup> It is also a hint that Socrates, in his pursuit of self-knowledge, is of benefit to the city *because* of his *ἀπραγμοσύνη*. To this, one may compare the defence of the contemplative life in *Gorgias*, and his advice to stay out of politics to Alcibiades in *Smp.* 216A4-6. (See section 4).

other-regarding aspects of the virtue. It is typically in a passage where the benefits of virtue are explicitly stated, that he will suggest that it is in fact (also) in the interest of the agent himself.

When the ultimate political goal of *σωφροσύνη* has been established, Socrates and Critias undertake one final attempt to 'save' the definition. Socrates suggests that he is prepared to allow the possibility of one *ἐπιστήμη* that assesses all specific kinds of knowledge, and that produces the happiness that ensues when everyone does his own proper job and does it well.

Unfortunately, it turns out that living 'knowingly' (*ἐπιστημόνως ζῆν*, 173E) does not suffice for living well or 'happily', because what one needs to that end is not knowledge of knowledge, but rather knowledge of good and bad (174B *τὸ ἀγαθὸν ... καὶ τὸ κακόν*). Thus, *σωφροσύνη* as 'knowledge of knowledge' seems useless unless it is equated with 'knowledge of good and bad', and therewith, by implication, with virtue *tout court*.<sup>67</sup> It now seems fully impossible to establish what use there is for *σωφροσύνη* if it is defined as 'knowledge of knowledge': for then it does not produce the obviously useful effects of conventional crafts, and is also distinct from the knowledge of the good that is to assure the correct application of these crafts. Thus, the final *aporia* of *Charmides* seems to warn against the identification of *σωφροσύνη* with a 'technical' type of self-knowledge: this would amount to an equation of *σωφροσύνη* and virtue in general.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> To this extent, *Charmides* runs into exactly the same *aporia* as *Laches*, the impossibility of distinguishing between *σωφροσύνη* and virtue in general.

<sup>68</sup> Stalley (2003) 276 seeks the solution of the *aporia* in the point that the two definitions are to be combined: 'A definition of virtue as the knowledge of good and evil would be true but would conceal the important point that this knowledge is not simply a matter of being well informed about the consequences of our actions but, rather, requires a redirection of our souls towards a true conception of the good.' This elaborates on Stalley's prior conclusion (*ibid.*) that *σωφροσύνη* can not be a technical type of knowledge. See Stalley (2000) 266: '*Charmides* implies that knowledge of the good is different in kind from *technai* such as those of medicine and navigation. ... This knowledge is achieved not through conventional instruction but through self-examination.' In both cases, Stalley seems more concerned with 'virtue' in general than with the specific function of *σωφροσύνη*.

8.5. Charmides: *Conclusions*

In surveying *Charmides*, we can observe that the dialogue explores a number of notions conventionally associated with traditional uses of *εὐφρων* and cognates, only to reject them all as *definitions* of the concept. Charmides' first definition (*τὸ κοσμίως πάντα πράττειν καὶ ἡσυχῇ*, 'doing everything in an orderly manner and quietly', Pl. *Chrm.* 159B) describes the use of *εὐφρων* to commend quiet and orderly behaviour in boys (use 13). It is found wanting on the ground that 'quietness', or rather slowness, is not always a good thing. The same refutation goes for the second definition, (*εὐφροσύνη* = *αἰδώς*, Pl. *Chrm.* 160E) which builds on the association of *αἰδώς* with *εὐφροσύνη* in various uses where *εὐφροσύνη* expresses a sense of propriety (as in my use 9). The third definition (*τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν*, 161B) invokes the ideal of the quiet, *ἀπράγμων* citizen (use 10). The formulation *τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν* is rejected because it does not account for the *awareness* that one is doing the right things, which Socrates takes to be central for *εὐφροσύνη* and does indeed seem to be implied by the 'intellectualist' associations of the term. (Remarkably, the notion of 'doing one's own job' returns as the definition of *δικαιοσύνη* in *Republic*, and there we find a neat division of labour between the two virtues: where *δικαιοσύνη* is a 'practical' division of tasks between the various classes of the state, *εὐφροσύνη* consists in their mental assent that this is indeed how things should be.) Finally, the fourth definition (*τὸ γινώσκειν ἑαυτόν*, 'knowing oneself', 164D) invokes the Delphic maxim, reminiscent of *εὐφροσύνη* in the use of man's compliance with the superiority to the gods (use 17). The definition is redefined in terms of Socratic self-knowledge and self-investigation, and while it is suggested that this is a very commendable activity, it is ultimately dismissed because *εὐφροσύνη* then cannot be distinguished meaningfully from other types of virtue.

Most of the uses of *εὐφροσύνη* that are activated by the associated terms and expressions contained in the four definitions are quite central. (For a diagram, see figure 12 at the end of this chapter.) They are not *absolutely* central, however: the prototypical interpretation of *εὐφροσύνη* as 'control of desires' is



not discussed. Are we to take it that it is not challenged either? If so, this accords well with the fact that in later discussions of *σωφροσύνη*, Plato takes this prototypical use as a point of departure. In *Charmides*, then, Socrates' display of self-control in the dramatic setting of the dialogue may well offer a hint as to how the dialectical *aporia* is finally to be solved.

Besides, *Charmides* offers a strong vindication of Socrates' possession of virtue. His *σωφροσύνη* is shown on a mundane level in his self-control at the sight of young Charmides. But apart from that, it is suggested that it is Socrates who is most earnestly in search of the 'knowledge of what one does and does not know', and that it is he who, ultimately, offers the greatest benefits to his city and constitutes the best example of the *σώφρων πολίτης*.<sup>69</sup> Here, the setting is important again, for Socrates is contrasted to two characters — Charmides and Critias — who, through their inadequacy in discussion and their dubious subsequent political careers, are exposed as 'false experts' on political virtue; in spite of their reputations, they do not really possess the quality.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> The encomium of Socrates by Alcibiades in *Symposium* offers a far more complete and complex account of Socrates' *ἀρεταί*. Again, Socrates' *σωφροσύνη* is an important ingredient in this eulogy, and again, *σωφροσύνη* takes the prototypical form of 'control of desires', for Socrates successfully withstands the attempts at seduction by Alcibiades. But Socrates' 'self-mastery' is related to many other situations in which he is firmly 'in control': his endurance of hunger and the cold (219E-220C), his concentration in thought (220C-D), his composure and courage in battle (220D-222C), and arguably even the 'justice' of his advice to Alcibiades not to manage the affairs of the Athenians as long as he cannot properly manage his own 'affairs' (216A). In that sense, Socrates offers an illustration of how the virtues can co-exist, and here too, *σωφροσύνη* would seem to take a quite central place in the 'network' of Socrates' various manifestations of virtue.

On the eulogy of Socrates in that speech, see Bury (1932) lx, Dover (1980) 164, Rowe (1998). On the relation of the speech to epideictic oratory, see North (1994) 206.

By contrast Gagarin (1977) and Nussbaum (1979) stress the *hybristic* element of Socrates in the speech, and argue that the reader is to take it as a criticism of the detached rationalism of the philosopher. Segoloni (1994) 13-108 is the most extensive recent treatment of the speech as an 'accusation' of Socrates.

<sup>70</sup> On the connection of Socrates with Critias and Charmides, see Vlastos (1994a) esp. 87-90, Notomi (2000) 237-241.

9. *The Definition of σωφροσύνη: Republic*

The fourth book of *Republic* offers definitive technical definitions of all the main virtues, σοφία, ἀνδρεία, σωφροσύνη and — the *definiendum* proper of the dialogue — δικαιοσύνη. In contrast with the early aporetic dialogues, the problematic identification of the virtues with knowledge is now given up, and this has the consequence for σωφροσύνη that Plato now firmly takes the prototypical notion of ‘control of desires’ as his point of departure, instead of trying to explain the virtue in terms of ‘self-knowledge’.

The distinction between σωφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη in *Republic* remains somewhat problematic. Socrates defines δικαιοσύνη on the basis of a process of elimination. He explicitly assumes that if σοφία, ἀνδρεία and σωφροσύνη are defined first, what is left must be δικαιοσύνη. This implies that these four virtues together cover the whole of civic and individual ἀρετή, and that there is no separate function for other qualities like, for instance, ὁσιότης.<sup>71</sup> More importantly, it also implies that there is no significant overlap between the four virtues. This may seem intuitively ‘right’ for σοφία and ἀνδρεία, which are characteristic functions of specific classes in the state and parts of the soul. The assumption is more problematic, however, where σωφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη are concerned, for these two are often closely associated, especially in their ‘civic’ senses with which a political text like *Republic* is naturally specifically concerned. In fact, the dialogue achieves a very neat, but arguably contrived distinction between the two virtues: δικαιοσύνη is now defined as τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν — as we have seen one of the definitions of σωφροσύνη in *Charmides* — and as in *Charmides*, this phrase is interpreted as implying that the various classes and parts of the soul all perform their proper function. So in a sense, δικαιοσύνη amounts to a proper division of labour between the virtues, and covers the practical sides of good citizen-

<sup>71</sup> In defence of Socrates’ procedure here, one may perhaps point to *Euthyphro* 12D1-3 (cf. p. 302n17 above), where τὸ ὅσιον is defined as a part of τὸ δίκαιον. But it seems pertinent to note that, while religion has its traditional and wholly uncontested place in Plato’s state, political ἀρετή itself is not by any means defined in religious terms.

ship. By contrast, *ωφροσύνη* is defined as the ‘harmony’ or ‘mutual agreement’ between the various classes of citizens and parts of the soul about who should be in charge. Here, *ωφροσύνη* covers the mental acceptance of the ‘rightness’ of this division of labour. Thus, the definition of *ωφροσύνη* covers very much the same ground as that of *δικαιοσύνη*,<sup>72</sup> if from a slightly different perspective, *ωφροσύνη* representing the emotional/cognitive endorsement of the practical division of labour envisaged by *δικαιοσύνη*.

Thus, the technical distinction between *ωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* is likely to strike the contemporary reader as somewhat artificial, and it seems to be in this respect that Plato, in his attempt at establishing clear-cut technical definitions, most obviously removes himself from the less categorical distinctions of ordinary language use.

After the discussion on the education of the soldiers (see section 6), Socrates turns to the distribution of the virtues within the state, in order to determine, by means of the process of elimination signalled above, the definition of *δικαιοσύνη* in the *πόλις*.

After *σοφία* and *ἀνδρεία* have been established as qualities that are, within the *πόλις*, the specific property of separate classes, the rulers and the soldiers, *ωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* are addressed next. Socrates now suggests that he would like to see if they can jump to *δικαιοσύνη* straight away, and skip the theme of *ωφροσύνη* altogether. When pressed by Glauco not to do so, he explains that *ωφροσύνη* is rather more complex than the other two virtues because it is ‘rather more like some kind of ‘concord’ or ‘harmony’ than the earlier two’ (*συμφωνίαι τινὲ καὶ ἁρμονίαι προσέοικεν μάλλον ἢ τὰ πρότερον*, 430E3-4). In explanation of this thesis, he returns to the ‘popular’ conception of *ωφροσύνη* as self-control (this time, unlike what we saw in the earlier discussion of the education of the guardians, without the addition of ‘obedience’):

Κόσμος πού τις, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, ἡ *ωφροσύνη* ἐστὶν καὶ ἡδονῶν τινῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐγκράτεια, ὥς φασι κρείττω δὴ αὐτοῦ λέγοντες οὐκ οἶδ’

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Williams (1973) 200 = (1997) 153.

ὄντινα τρόπον, καὶ ἄλλα ἄττα τοιαῦτα ὥςπερ ἵχνη αὐτῆς λέγεται. ἡ γάρ;  
(Pl. R. 430E6-9)

‘I suppose that *ωφροσύνη* is some kind of order’, I said, ‘and control of certain pleasures and desires, as they claim when they use the expression ‘stronger than oneself’ in some strange way, and there are some other similar things that point us to the track of *ωφροσύνη*. Right?’

Here, Plato takes up the prototypical notion of *ωφροσύνη*, and starts to elaborate on this notion by working out the implications of the associated phrase ‘being stronger than oneself’. It is suggested that this oxymoron means that some better ‘part’ of the soul is in control of a worse part (which neatly paves the way for the introduction, later on, of the notion of the tripartite soul). In the *πόλις*, this is taken to mean that the ‘better’ desires of those educated for leadership take precedence over the worse desires of those who are not.

Now this would seem to suggest that *ωφροσύνη* is the exclusive property of the leaders rather than their subjects (and, in the individual *ψυχή*, of the rational part rather than the others), but there are evidently some problems connected with such a conclusion. First, this would mean that *ωφροσύνη* would again not be clearly distinguished from *σοφία*, the expertise *par excellence* of the leaders. Second, the whole discussion of the education of the military training in book III seems to show that *ωφροσύνη* cannot be the exclusive property of the leaders, for the ordinary soldiers under their command must possess *ωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* as well.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>73</sup> It is disputed whether individual members of the lower classes in the state should *individually* have the virtues of their classes at the level of the city, *ωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*. At first sight, Plato’s analogy between the city and the soul suggests that the city as a whole on the macro level is comparable to the individual soul as a whole on the micro level: both are essentially tripartite, each of the parts having its specific virtue(s). Now the parts of the state consist of individual citizens, each having souls that consist of three parts with their specific function. On a strict reading of the analogy, this second subdivision should apply not only (a) to the parts of the city, but also (b) to the parts of the individual souls, which leads to the absurdity of a subdivision of the parts of the soul, each with its *logistikon*, *thumoeides* etc.

But Plato paves himself a way out of this dilemma by activating the traditional notion that *σωφροσύνη* involves obedience as well as control (see 389D-E, section 5 above), which implies that *σωφροσύνη* belongs to the ruled as well as the rulers. This implication is now taken up to prepare for the conclusion that *σωφροσύνη* in the state is some kind of consensus between rulers and subjects about who should be in charge, and that *σωφροσύνη* in fact belongs to both these classes (431E6); *σωφροσύνη* is now redefined as ‘a concord between what is weaker and stronger by nature about which of the two should govern, both in the city and in each individual’ (χείρωνός τε καὶ ἀμείνωνος κατὰ φύσιν συμφωνίαν ὁπότερον δεῖ ἄρχειν καὶ ἐν πόλει καὶ ἐν ἐνὶ ἐκάστῳ, 432A7-9).

Thus, Plato takes up the prototypical notion of *σωφροσύνη* as control of desires, and extends this notion by means of his concept of the tri-partite soul: *σωφροσύνη* is now the state in which the lesser parts of the soul let themselves be governed by the *logistikon*. He then extrapolates this conception to the city as a whole, and develops his notion of ‘political’ *σωφροσύνη* as a concord between the superior and inferior classes in the state about who should govern the city. In a sense, Plato now offers a new and highly original interpretation of the traditional notion of *σωφροσύνη* as *εὐνομία*, in which *σωφροσύνη* was traditionally used with an aristocratic bias to commend acquiescence in the *status quo* (my use 18).

When this definition of *σωφροσύνη* in the state is accepted, Socrates once again stresses the elusiveness of *δικαιοσύνη* (432B7-D1), and then goes on that it must be ‘what is left’ (τὸ

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The clearest statement of the analogy is Williams (1973). The most common way out of the dilemma is to deny that the analogy with the πόλις holds for the souls of the lower classes: these do not have virtue. So, esp., Irwin (1977) 331, (1995) 229-231 with 383n.9, where see for further references.

The opposite view (to which I subscribe here) is defended by Vlastos (1973) 111-39, esp. 133-4, and Lear (1997). Lear (1997) claims that the isomorphism of soul and state is not a strict analogy between the whole and its parts (‘the state is just etc. if its parts (the men) are just etc.’): it depends on psychological relations between ‘inside’ (the soul) and ‘outside’ (the city). On this reading, a city is just *in the way* that a soul is just (its justice being an ‘externalisation’ of that of the soul and *vice versa*), and this statement does not imply a judgement on each and everyone of the city’s members. Thus, the problem of the analogy is, I think, solved.

ὑπολειφθέν, 433C1) of virtue in the state after the other three have been defined. Here he introduces the notion of τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν, 'doing one's own job', familiar as a characteristic feature of *ωφροσύνη* in *Charmides*: *δικαιοσύνη* in the state means that the members of the subordinated classes do their jobs without contesting that the rulers should govern. Thus, in a sense, *δικαιοσύνη* ensures a division of labour that is very much the practical implementation of the 'consensus' achieved by *ωφροσύνη*.

Arguably, Plato has not made life easy for himself here in at least two ways.

First, it seems clear that the long detour via the virtues of the state back to those of the individual was necessary because it was not easy to convince sceptics that *δικαιοσύνη* is beneficial to the individual. But it seems equally clear that for a demonstration of Plato's conception of *ωφροσύνη*, it would have been far easier to start with the case of the individual soul. In fact, Plato does indeed appeal to the individual soul in the discussion of *ωφροσύνη* in the state (at 431A3-B3) and thus seems to acknowledge this problem. However, if Plato had chosen to treat *ωφροσύνη* in the individual soul first, it would have been exceedingly difficult to avoid the conclusion that *ωφροσύνη* is the domination of the rational part. This would have been damaging to the comparison with the state, for in the state, *ωφροσύνη* is not the exclusive property of the leading class, but a concord between classes. The detour pays off then, for *ωφροσύνη* is now the shared property of the various classes with their distinct individual virtues. More than ever before, it is the function of *ωφροσύνη* to bind these qualities together, and to ensure that, say, *ἀνδρεία* and *δικαιοσύνη* cannot be opposed to each other as they can in ordinary usage.<sup>74</sup>

Second, Plato sets out to distinguish *ωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* in the field of political *ἀρετή*, an area where they are almost interchangeable in common Greek usage. What Plato

<sup>74</sup> The distribution of the virtues over the classes and the parts of the soul implies, I think, that Plato in *Politeia* no longer assumes complete reciprocity or unity between the virtues: among the non-philosophers at least there should be 'virtue without knowledge'. Contra Irwin (1995) 230-1, 236-9.

achieves here, it seems, is a technical distinction by which *σωφροσύνη* is narrowed down to two quite central uses ('self-control' and 'εὐνομία'), and two others, almost equally central, are reserved for *δικαιοσύνη* ('no injustice' and 'quietness'/*ἀπραγμοσύνη*). (See figure 14 at the end of this chapter for a visualisation of the division.) On balance, the focus of the term *δικαιοσύνη* is more on the 'behavioural' uses (each group performs 'its own proper functions'), and *σωφροσύνη* focuses rather more on the recognition of each of these groups that this division of labour is indeed how things should be. Of course, the technical distinction is neat, but Plato finds himself at one remove here from conventional Greek usage, in which both terms are used more freely to cover both the behavioural and cognitive aspects of the same type of acceptable civic behaviour. The advantage of defining *δικαιοσύνη* in terms of *τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν* seems to be that this is a formula to which even hardened cynics are unlikely to protest: even a Thrasymachus is likely to agree with Socrates that it is just that the rulers should rule, and that the ruled should not interfere with their government, although he may well still disagree with Socrates on the question *who* the rulers should be.

Now that the distribution of virtues in the state has been established, Socrates sets out to look for their equivalents in the soul of the individual. It is on the analogy of the state that the famous notion of the tripartite soul is introduced (436A-441C).

This notion of a composite soul seems to some extent a natural extrapolation from conventional ideas on *ἐγκρατεία* and *σωφροσύνη*. In the section on the definition of *σωφροσύνη*, Plato had already shown that an expression like *κρείττω ἑαυτοῦ εἶναι* implies some kind of division of the soul. Plato seems to have had a precursor here in Antiphon the sophist, whose remarks on *σωφροσύνη* show he was on the brink of a similar conception:

*σωφροσύνην δὲ ἀνδρὸς οὐκ ἂν ἄλλο ὀρθότερόν τις κρίνειεν, ἢ ὅστις τοῦ θυμοῦ ταῖς παραχρήμα ἡδοναῖς ἐμφράσσει αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν (καὶ) κρατεῖν τε καὶ νικᾶν ἡδυνήθη αὐτὸς ἑαυτόν· ὃς δὲ θέλει χαρίσασθαι τῷ θυμῷ παραχρήμα, θέλει τὰ κακίῳ ἀντὶ τῶν ἀμεινόνων.*  
(Antiphon fr. 58,12-6.)

As to the *σωφροσύνη* of a man, there is no way to judge it more correctly, than if someone blocks himself to the instant desires of his spirit and proves able to rule and defeat himself. But the man who wants to gratify his spirit immediately, wants what is worse instead of what is better.

Antiphon in this fragment goes as far as to identify the *θυμός* as the part to be mastered, but without identifying a specific dominating part. But if ‘being stronger than oneself’ at least implies a rudimentary complexity of the soul, Plato’s division into *three* parts, rather than two, which he needs for the sake of the analogy to the state, still seems a novel extension of the concept. It seems necessary to accommodate the more assertive drives connected with *ἀνδρεία*,<sup>75</sup> and Plato introduces this novelty at length and with conspicuous circumspection. Again, he seeks the support of common Greek usage, appealing this time to Odysseus’ ‘dialogue’ with his *κράδιη* in *Od.* 20.17.<sup>76</sup>

When the notion of a tripartite soul has been sufficiently established, the identification of the *ἀρεταί* in the soul proceeds smoothly. First, it is established that *σοφία* and *ἀνδρεία* are the distinguishing virtues of the *λογιστικόν* and the *θυμοειδές* respectively, then the soul is said to be *σώφρων* ‘when the governing part and the two governed parts agree that the rational part is to rule, and they do not revolt against it’ (*ὅταν τό τε ἄρχον καὶ τὸ ἄρχομένω τὸ λογιστικὸν ὁμοδοξῶσι δεῖν ἄρχειν καὶ μὴ στασιάσκειν αὐτῷ*, 442C10-D1), and *δικαιοσύνη* in the individual means that the inferior parts of the soul perform their own functions without interfering with the domination of the rational part (443C-444A).

What Plato achieves here is the sophisticated and complex twin structure of a political and psychological account of virtue, built on many notions explored separately in his earlier dialogues. It is clear that for his definition of *σωφροσύνη* in individual and state, he draws on *two* traditional notions associated with conventional uses of *σώφρων* and cognates. In the case of the individual, Plato takes the notion of ‘being master of oneself’, asso-

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Cross & Woosley (1964) 115-8, Irwin (1995) 216-7.

<sup>76</sup> *στῆθος δὲ πλήξας κράδιην ἠνίπαπε μύθῳ*.



ciated with the prototypical notion of *ωφροσύνη* as 'control of the desires', and uses this as the basis for the construct of a complex soul with one part controlling two others. Transposed to the state, *ωφροσύνη* means that the ruling class rules *with* the consent of the two subjected classes. This consent is of course vital for the stability and unity of the state, and this is probably why Plato — again with justification in popular usage — has carefully avoided the natural conclusion that *ωφροσύνη* *only* has to do with *κρατεῖν* and *ἄρχειν*. Here, Plato takes a second traditional notion of *ωφροσύνη*, again quite central to *ωφροσύνη* in the context of the *πόλις* (if perhaps elsewhere belonging to a predominantly aristocratic/conservative discourse): that of *ἐννομία* 'or compliance with the existing *nomoi* in the state. This is brought in to ensure that *ωφροσύνη* is a property of the subjects as well as their masters. But Plato makes sure that this notion is brought in only after *ωφροσύνη* has been freed from its conventional aristocratic associations: the idea of *ἐννομία* discussed in *Republic* is significantly more sophisticated than the conservative class awareness ('doing one's own job') of a Critias.

This means that *ωφροσύνη* is a virtue of all classes and all parts of the soul, and that the other *ἀρεταί* that are specific to some parts are yet to be given a well-defined individual profile. In a sense, *ἀνδρεία* fares best. The long section on the education of the soldiers is in fact to be regarded as a virtuoso effort to balance and reconcile *ωφροσύνη* with the traditional martial quality of *ἀνδρεία* (cf. section 6). The virtue of the leaders and of the *λογιστικόν*, *σοφία*, is by no means as well defined at this stage of the discussion. It would seem clear that they need some capacity for 'deliberation' in order to perform their controlling tasks, but it is not yet clear what this quality means and how it is to be acquired. It is in fact the purpose of a large section of the remainder of the dialogue, from the end of book V (471C) down to book VII, to argue that what these rulers need is a full philosophical training, and to give a full account of true philosophical *σοφία*.

Ironically, *δικαιοσύνη* is perhaps still not so very clearly distinguished from *ωφροσύνη*. The definition of *δικαιοσύνη* is in fact derived from a notion conventionally associated with yet an-

other use of *σωφροσύνη*, the political notion of τὰ ἑαυτοῦ πράττειν (my group of uses no. 10). To this extent it might be argued that in Plato's account, *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* very much represent two sides of the same coin, *δικαιοσύνη* focusing on the practical sides of life of the πόλις, and *σωφροσύνη* on the mentality that goes with this just behaviour.

### 10. *Plato and σωφροσύνη: Conclusions*

In the first sections of this chapter (sections 2-7), we investigated a number of passages in which Plato links *σωφροσύνη* to other virtues. As we have seen, Plato makes use of the multiple uses of *σώφρων* and cognates to establish such similarities.

*Protagoras* (section 3) argues for the similarity between prudential *σωφροσύνη* and *σοφία* (both share the antonym *ἄφροσύνη*), and then reinterprets *σωφροσύνη* in other-regarding terms to link these two virtues with *δικαιοσύνη*. In *Protagoras*, these associations are used to argue for the 'unity' (see section 2) of the virtues in refutation of Protagoras' denial of this unity; ultimately, all virtues are defined in terms of 'knowledge'.

*Laches* suggests a link between *σωφροσύνη* and a quality that at first sight might seem to be one of its opposites, the assertive, and even aggressive quality of *ἀνδρεία*. The dialogue contains a fleeting suggestion that 'courage' also applies to confronting the 'dangers' of one's desires and that *ἀνδρεία* includes the prototypical manifestations of *σωφροσύνη* in the use of 'control of desires' (section 4). But the dialogue does not press the point: again, the virtues are ultimately identified with knowledge. In this respect, *Laches* claims a unity of virtues very similar to *Protagoras*.

The establishment of a link between *ἀνδρεία* and the non-competitive qualities of *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* becomes a rather more pressing task with opponents who question the value of these non-competitive qualities. In *Gorgias* (section 5), the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* is vital for establishing a link between *ἀνδρεία* and the utterly other-regarding quality of *δικαιοσύνη*. Here, a different strategy is applied: now, the *demonstrandum* is not that the virtues are one, but rather that they are

compatible and co-existent. Socrates first elicits from Callicles a rejection of *σωφροσύνη* in its use of ‘control of desires’, and then brings in *σωφροσύνη* again in its use of ‘prudence’, as soon as Callicles has to accept that one needs the ability to decide which pleasures to pursue and which to reject. When Callicles admits to the necessity of prudence, Socrates can vindicate the necessity of *σωφροσύνη* in general, and infers the necessity of *δικαιοσύνη* from it. Thus, *Gorgias* suggests that *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* are both necessary for the pursuit of the ‘good’, and the association of *σωφροσύνη* with ‘prudence’ suggest that the pursuit of the good by means of these virtues is not merely a matter of respect for others at the expense of one’s self-interest, but that it actually benefits the agent himself.

In later texts, there are more practical issues connected with *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία*. Plato repeatedly deals with the problem of ensuring that the citizens of the state acquire both *σωφροσύνη* and *ἀνδρεία* in the appropriate measure, even though the qualities might seem to belong to entirely different temperaments (section 6). *Republic* answers this problem by means of a programme of education in music/poetry and gymnastics, both reformed in such a way that they contribute exclusively to the enforcement of these two qualities. In *Politicus*, on the other hand, the problem is addressed as one of demography, and the task of the statesman is said to be to ensure an appropriate ‘mix’ in the state between people of a martial temperament and those with a quiet nature.

Now the success of Plato’s persuasive use of the polysemy of our terms depends on the reader’s lack of awareness of what is going on: a reader will follow only if he does not see sharply which persuasive moves are being made. Therefore, the texts that exploit the polysemy of *σωφροσύνη* will never do so explicitly, and will never call attention to the fact that more than one use of our terms is activated. Things are very different in the dialogues that attempt a definition of *σωφροσύνη*. Here, Plato explicitly names many of the uses of our terms, if with the goal of reducing this polysemy and focusing on its prototypical use of ‘control of desires’. In *Charmides* (section 8), a wealth of terms and expressions traditionally associated with various uses of *σώφρων*

and cognates is explored. They are all rejected as *definitions* of *σωφροσύνη*, and specifically, the dialogue deals extensively with the problem of defining *σωφροσύνη* along 'Socratic' lines in terms of 'knowledge'.

One notion that is suggested, but left unchallenged, in *Charmides* is the prototypical use of *σωφροσύνη* as 'control of desire'. In *Republic* (section 9), Plato elaborates on this notion in order to define *σωφροσύνη* both in the individual and in the state. The self-control of the individual is now described as a concord between the 'rational' part of the soul and the inferior parts, which submit to its control. Similarly, *σωφροσύνη* in the state is an agreement between the various classes that the leading class should indeed be in charge, and this 'political' *σωφροσύνη* seems to represent a sophisticated interpretation by Plato of the traditional 'aristocratic' idea that *σωφροσύνη* in the state manifests itself as compliance with the *status quo*, or *εὐνομία*.

Meanwhile, the main problem in book Four is the demarcation between *σωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη*. When *σωφροσύνη* is used in its 'civic' sense, it covers such aspects as respect for the laws, and restraint of injustice and violence, and is often virtually synonymous to *δικαιοσύνη*. The discussion of *Republic* manages to establish technical definitions of the virtues that achieve a more or less clear-cut distinction between the two: *δικαιοσύνη* is now confined to the practical aspect of 'keeping to one's own job', both for the various classes of citizens in the state and for the various parts of the soul: each class and each part of the soul is to confine itself to the performance of its own proper function. By contrast, *σωφροσύνη* is now defined as the cognitive/emotional aspect of this practical type of self-restraint: it is defined as the consent of each class and every part of the soul that this division of labour is indeed right. Thus, a technical distinction between the two virtues is achieved, even if this is done at the cost of a certain degree of abstraction: Plato's technical definitions are clearly at some distance from ordinary language use, which does not always allow for strict distinctions.

Thus, in summary, we can observe how Plato uses quite a number of traditional uses of *ωφροσύνη*, but in his attempt at definition centres on its prototypical manifestation of ‘control of desires’ (group of uses no. 6), and a larger-scale pendant of *εὐνομία* for the *πόλις* as a whole (group of uses no. 18).

The senses used by Plato in *Charmides* are shown in figure 12: uses that are activated are highlighted in grey, and the single central use that is not formally rejected is highlighted in darker grey. The uses in Plato in general are shown in figure 13. Here, all active uses in Plato are highlighted by means of a light grey background. Figure 14 tries to visualise the technical definitions of *ωφροσύνη* and *δικαιοσύνη* in *Republic*. Here, the uses with a dark-grey background are those that are covered by the definition of *ωφροσύνη*; those with a lighter background are ‘reserved’ as the province of *δικαιοσύνη*.

What the diagrams generally show is the fact that there are some marked ‘centripetal’ tendencies. Plato is evidently aware of the whole range of traditional uses of the term, and uses them (or at least those uses that apply to men) for purposes of persuasion, but he nevertheless shows a strong tendency to focus on what is the prototypical use of the term, ‘control of desire’. Of the uses in *Charmides*, this is only one that goes unchallenged (fig. 12). And it is also the use that forms the basis for the definition in *Republic* of *ωφροσύνη* as applied to the soul of the individual (fig. 14). *Republic* in fact shows Plato’s tendency toward the central uses in its strongest form: here, the definition of *ωφροσύνη* ultimately derives from two quite common and central uses of our terms: ‘control of desire’ as shown by the individual adult male citizen, and *εὐνομία* as shown by the citizens of the *polis* as a collective.

Besides, even in texts which allow for a relatively great variety of uses (*Charmides*), there is one centripetal tendency that must not be overlooked: the ‘androcentricity’ of Plato’s conceptions. The uses of *ωφροσύνη* that Plato addresses are mostly those that in ordinary language use apply to free adult male citizens, the ‘central’ members, so to speak, of society. Plato gives some attention to ‘boyish’ manifestations of *ωφροσύνη* in *Charmides*, but gives them relatively short shrift. In the hierarchical construct of the state in *Republic*, *ωφροσύνη* incorporates

some aspects of the submission demanded of subjects in relatively authoritarian traditional views of *σωφροσύνη*. But that is it. All other uses are on the main central axis representing the free individual male citizen. Women and girls are ignored completely. The contrast with some other genres and authors, Euripides above all, could hardly have been more striking.

Thus we see how, in his attempts to get to the 'core' of *σωφροσύνη*, Plato generally focuses on the most central members of society, and then in his definitions concentrates on the most typical ways in which our terms are applied to these central members. In semantic terms, the Platonic attempt to define the essence of an entity, may be described as a definition of its prototypical uses in relation to the most central members of society.

Fig. 12. σωφροσύνη in *Charmides*

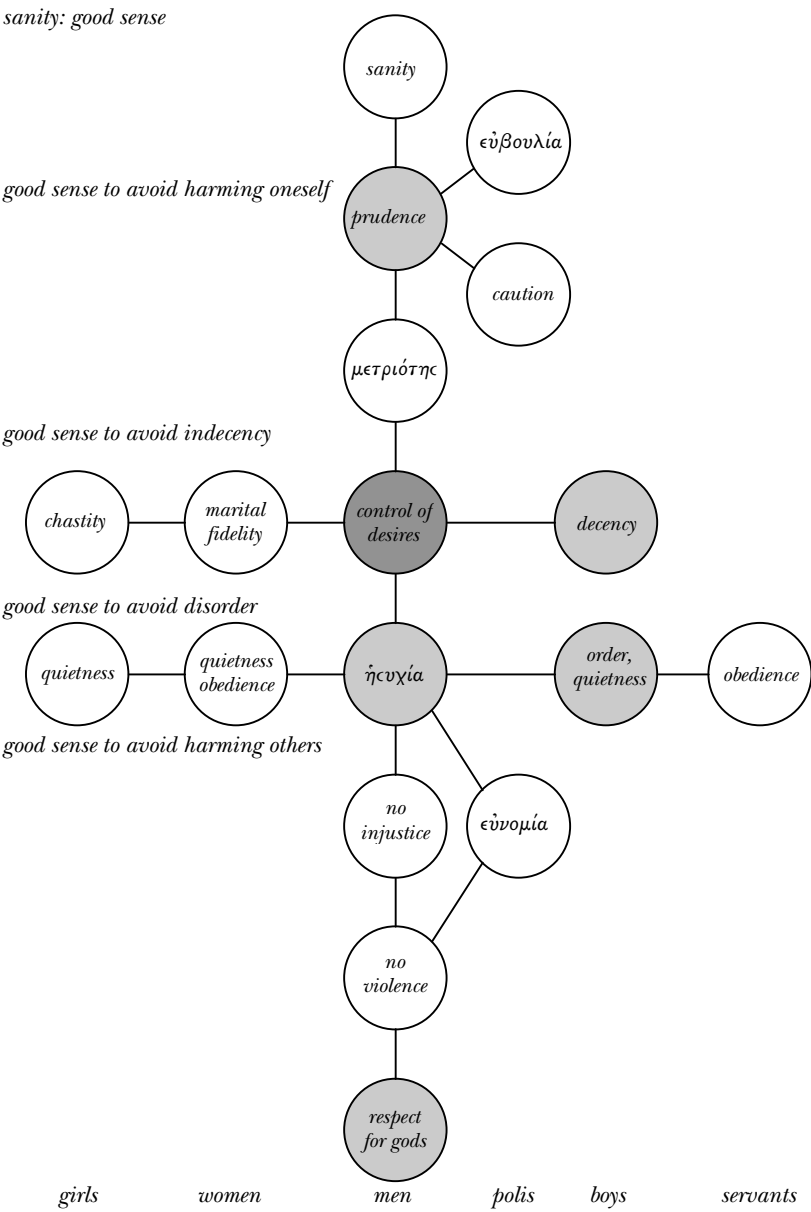


Fig. 13. σωφροσύνη and cognates in Plato.

*sanity: good sense*

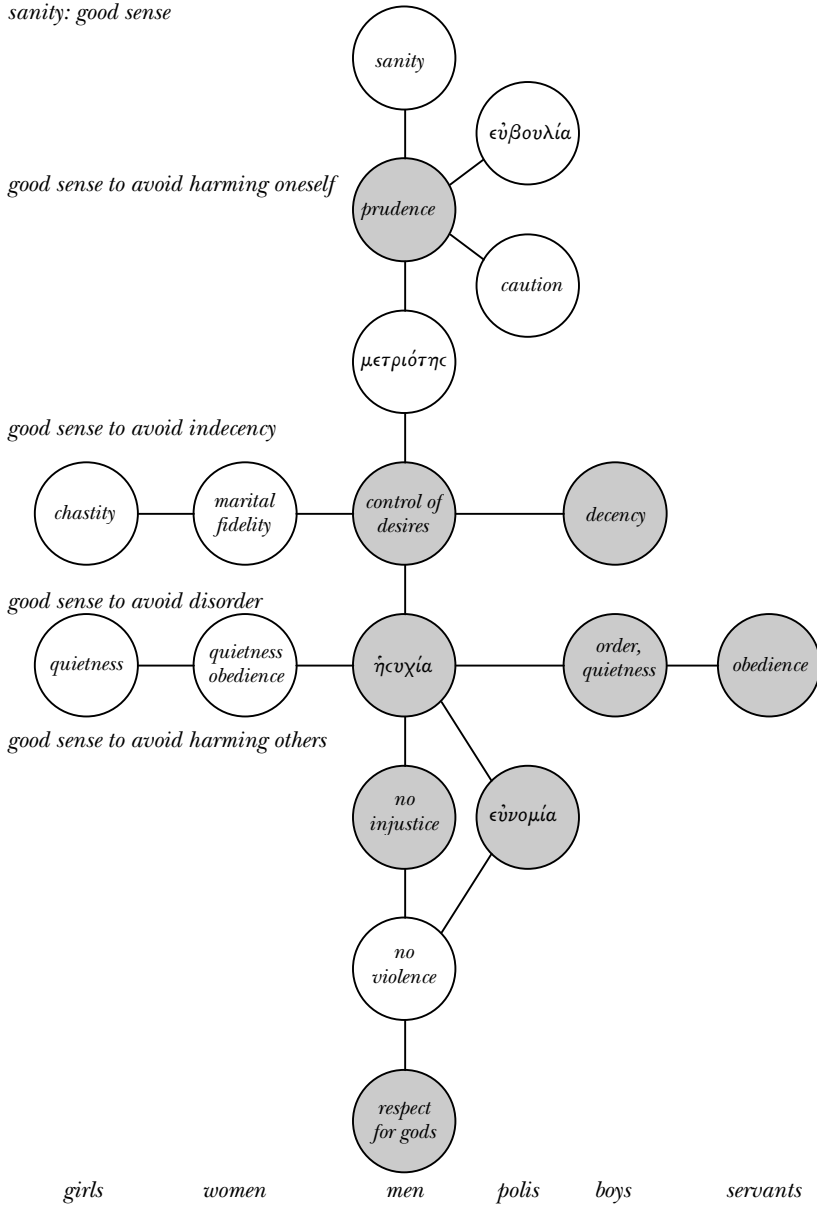
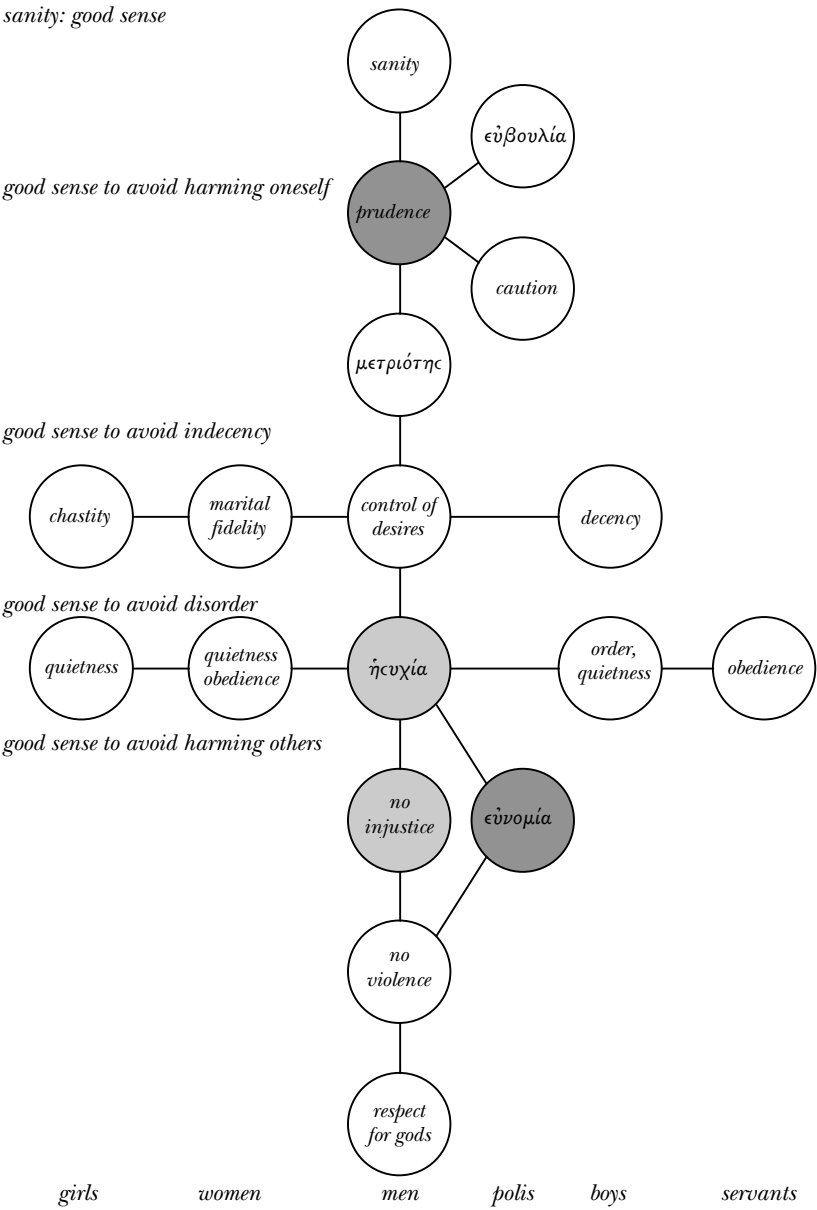




Fig. 14. σωφροσύνη and δικαιοσύνη in *Republic*.



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## GENERAL INDEX

- Ajax 35, 38, 42n1, 58, 87-9, 123-33,  
137, 141, 143, 145-6, 149, 263,  
266-8, 292, 297, 332
- androcentrism 271, 292, 294-5,  
352-3  
    women adopting masculine  
    values 264, 272
- Andromache 23, 29, 70, 144, 152,  
154-9, 161, 183-4, 188, 264
- categories, 16-26, 29, 30, 33, 270-2,  
274-5  
    boundaries of 20, 23-4, 29;  
    classical vs. cognitive  
    conceptions of 15-17, 19-21
- caution in foreign affairs 192, 203,  
208, 210, 212, 216 221, 256-7
- Charmides 3-7, 12, 29-30, 33, 37,  
39, 224, 228, 262, 265, 273,  
292, 295, 323-30, 332, 339-40
- chastity (girls) 12, 116-17, 154,  
261
- chastity (Hippolytus) 144, 164,  
166-7
- Clytemnestra 64, 67n53, 99, 100,  
105, 108-12, 116n28, 118-21,  
150-2, 153, 158-9, 162, 188, 260,  
264, 272,
- civil strife, avoidance of 75, 84-6,  
88, 91, 98, 99, 107-9, 248, 250,  
269
- cognitive grammar 14, 16, 19, 25
- control of desires 1-2, 5-6, 27, 33,  
35, 39, 40, 93, 95, 98, 144, 145,  
151-3, 154, 163, 188, 225, 229,  
235, 241, 249, 251, 257-60, 262,  
274, 288-90, 292, 294, 301, 306,  
308, 311, 317, 322-3, 325, 339-  
41, 344, 349-52
- control of fear 113-17, 120-1
- decency (boys), see shame
- deliberation in council 192, 201-3,  
206, 208, 213, 219, 254
- democracy, restoration of 225, 247-8,  
250; moderate origins: 247-8
- drinking 93-5
- etymology 10, 54, 252, 326
- family resemblance 6, 16, 21, 25, 28-31,  
274-5, 251, 293
- fidelity (women) 13-14, 22, 29-30, 33,  
65, 67, 96-7, 111-12, 144-5, 154, 156,  
158-9, 174, 188, 225n1, 251, 260-1,  
262, 264
- gods, avoidance of offences against 100-  
3, 110-12, 120, 123, 126, 131-2, 137,  
141, 147, 150-1, 165, 180-2, 188, 245,  
267-9, 315, 339
- injustice, avoidance of 22n29, 37, 39, 75,  
80, 85, 92, 98, 203, 224-5, 229, 233,  
235, 243-5, 247, 263, 266-7, 269, 290,  
295, 300, 303, 311, 315, 346, 351
- intellectualism, Socratic 298
- isolationism: see caution in foreign  
    affairs
- Labov, W. 23
- Langacker, network model, 3, 14, 29-32,  
34, 36
- laws, respect for 224, 229, 256, 266-7,  
351
- madness, see sanity
- Mahler, Gustav, 21-2
- moderation of expenses, 227, 235, 241-  
2, 246, 248, 249, 257-60, 289-90
- network model, see Langacker
- non-interventionism, see caution
- obedience, see quiet behaviour  
    (servants)
- Odysseus 8, 33, 41-6, 48, 49n13, 53, 57,  
61-9, 70-74, 124-9, 139-40, 268, 318,  
347

- control of anger 70-4; unheroic traits 87, 97-8
- Peleus 89, 152, 158, 229, 258
- Penelope 9, 41, 43, 45-6, 48-9, 61, 69, 252
- prototype of *κῶφρων* wife 23, 26, 29, 33, 35, 42n1, 62-8, 73, 154, 258, 260
- Phaedra 144, 149, 163-73, 188-9
- physical symptoms of *κωφροσύνη*: 5, 12, 238, 272-4, 251
- polysemy, 2-3, 17-18, 26, 30, 143, 293
- persuasive exploitation of 2, 39, 143-4, 189, 293-5, 322, 345-50; reduction of 2, 39-40, 293-4, 350
- Proteus 144, 151, 162, 258
- prototypes 2, 14, 16, 24-6, 27, 30-5, 39-40, 251, 253, 259, 261, 262, 265, 275, 293-5 306-7, 311, 323, 325-8, 339, 41, 343-4, 348-53
- prudence 8-10, 43, 48, 50, 52, 56, 75, 98, 125, 138-40, 148-50, 153, 187, 188, 191, 193, 195, 197, 201, 203-4, 212-3, 217, 221, 223, 253-5, 260, 290, 292, 305, 311, 314, 322, 350
- quiet behaviour
- boys 6, 45, 50, 74, 227-8, 251, 262, 265-6, 273, 326-9, 339;
  - girls 100, 113-7, 134-5, 251, 262, 265, 273, 289, 290; men 85, 89, 93, 98; 125, 144, 148, 153, 178, 182, 210, 219, 231, 234-5, 242, 245-7, 250, 262-3, 269, 274, 295, 301, 319, 321, 330, 339, 346, 350;
  - servants and inferiors 50, 74, 118-19, 125, 262, 266; women 100, 113-7, 134, 144, 155-6, 159, 188-9, 262, 263-5, 273
- Rosch, Eleanor 24-5, 34
- sanity, soundness of mind 9-10, 22, 28, 48-50, 54, 143, 145-8, 153, 174, 197-9, 221, 252-3
- schema (Langacker) 29, 31-2, 274-6
- shame (boys) 4, 6, 12, 15, 30, 224, 228, 257, 265, 273, 329
- soundness of mind, see sanity
- Sparta, 38, 98, 152, 156-8, 193, 208-16, 256
- alleged permissive attitude with regard to women 152, 156-8;
  - reputation for *κωφροσύνη* 193, 202, 214, 245, 269
- stereotypes 24n33, 30, 117, 153, 158, 215, 224
- Telemachus 68-70
- a *κῶφρων* youth 44-6, 69, 265; as a responsible adult 68-9
- tyrants, oriental 192, 194-9, 221
- unity of virtues 295-8, 299, 304, 316-7, 322-3, 349-50
- violence, control of 99, 102-13, 120, 144, 147, 150-1, 153, 188, 224-5, 229, 233-4, 243-5, 247, 249-50, 266-7, 288, 291
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig 6, 20-2, 28, 30

## INDEX OF GREEK TERMS

- ἀγαθός 63, 77, 85, 88, 195, 316,  
     325, 228  
 ἀεσίφρων 59-60  
 αἰδώς 4, 6, 12, 15, 41, 45, 48, 50-4,  
     57, 61, 74, 81, 94, 127-8, 153,  
     167, 212-3, 257, 265, 274, 294,  
     300-1, 324, 329, 339  
 ἀνανδρία 213, 305, 313, 316  
 ἀνδρεία 1, 5, 7, 27, 38, 39, 123-4,  
     133, 141, 193, 218-20, 242, 264,  
     266, 292, 293-4, 297, 298, 299,  
     300, 301, 304, 305-21, 322, 328,  
     341, 342, 343, 345, 347, 348,  
     349, 350  
     difficult to reconcile with  
     σωφροσύνη 15, 123-4, 133, 141,  
     292, 293-4, 297, 299, 305-8,  
     321, 348, 349-50  
 ἀπράγμων, ἀπραγμοσύνη 125, 224,  
     230-3, 234, 245-7, 250, 263,  
     295, 330, 339  
 ἀρετή 64-5, 77, 79, 89, 103, 104,  
     123, 127, 133, 156, 157, 194,  
     210, 216, 261, 264, 265, 292,  
     295, 299-302, 304-5, 315, 341,  
     345, 347, 348  
 ἄφρων 59-61, 82, 95, 187, 254, 257  
     as antonym of σώφρων 254, 257  
 δίκαιος 81, 104, 266, 297, 299, 301,  
     311  
     associated with σώφρων 81, 266  
 δικαιοσύνη 1-2, 37, 75, 104, 242,  
     243-5, 266, 291-2, 293-5, 298,  
     299-304, 305-6, 310-11, 314-16,  
     322-4, 331, 337, 339, 341-2,  
     344-52  
     near-synonymous with some  
     uses of σωφροσύνη 37, 266, 299-  
     304, 310-16; distinguished  
     from σωφροσύνη in *Republic*  
     295, 341-2, 345-6, 348-9, 351  
 δίκη 77, 81, 103, 165, 300-1  
 εἶκω 123n1, 131-2  
 εὐβουλία 102, 202, 206-8, 213,  
     221, 233, 256  
 εὐνομία 75, 86-8, 90-2, 98, 192, 202, 217-  
     8, 221, 256, 269, 292, 295, 344, 346,  
     348, 351-2  
 εὐσέβεια 104, 137  
 εὐσεβέω 134  
 εὐσεβής 89, 104, 111  
 ἐχέφρων 42, 62-5, 67-8, 73  
 ἡμερος/ἡμερότης 320  
 ἡσυχία 6, 85, 115, 173-4, 245-7, 326-9  
 κακός 77n6, 127  
 κόσμιος 6, 235-7, 241-2, 257, 314-5, 320  
     ass. with σώφρων 235-7, 257  
 μαλακία, μαλακός 320  
 μέτριος, μετρίότης 240-2, 248, 259-60  
     ass. with σώφρων: 241, 259-60  
 νῆπιος 69-70, 94, 254, 257  
 ὀσιότης 300-3, 322, 341  
 πεπνυμένος 42, 45, 61, 68-9, 73  
 περίφρων 28, 62-5, 67, 73  
 πινυτός 66-7  
 σοφία 7, 74, 174, 179, 181-2, 186, 264,  
     266, 292, 293-4, 296, 298, 299-304,  
     305-6, 308-9, 311, 316-7, 322-3, 325,  
     341-3, 347-9  
     link with σωφροσύνη 293-4, 302-3  
 στάσις 75, 83, 85-8, 91-2, 97, 193-4, 218-  
     21, 289, 291, 305, 320  
 σωφρονέω, σωφροσύνη, σώφρων  
     aristocratic/oligarchic overtones 76-  
     92, 97-8, 193, 202, 216-8; etymology  
     of 10, 54-5, 252, 326; persuasive use  
     124, 138, 143, 186-7, 193, 202, 223,  
     247, 254, 255, 259, 293, 295, 350;  
     physical symptoms 12, 242, 251-2,  
     272-4, 326  
 σωφρονίζω, σωφρόμιμα, σωφρονιστής  
     290-1  
 σωφρόνως 288-9  
 τάξις 2, 299, 314-6, 318, 320, 326

- ὑβρις 17, 77, 81, 83-6, 101, 119,  
128-9, 150, 162, 230, 234, 243-  
4, 268  
antonym of some uses of  
σωφροσύνη 243-4
- φρένεσ, loss/destruction of 54-61  
φρονέω, εὖ φρονέω 108-9, 174, 179-80,  
253  
ass. with σωφρονέω 253

## SELECTIVE INDEX OF WORKS AND PASSAGES

Aeschines		1012-13	116, 261
1	261		
1.11	238	Ps.-Andocides	
1.22	237n22	4.40	243-4
1.25	238, 242, 274	Antiphon Orat.	
1.136-7	238	1.3.3.7	290
1.151	289	4.4.1	244
1.159	239		
1.189	237n22	Antiphon Soph.	
2.4	239	fr. 58.12-6	346-7
2.151	240	fr. 59	236n21
2.176	248n40, 289		
3.168-76	240-1	Aristophanes	
		<i>Acharnenses</i>	
Aeschylus		611	231
<i>Agamemnon</i>		<i>Aves</i>	
160-6	106	1433	230
176-83	107-8	1538-41	232-3
351	111	<i>Ecclesiazusae</i>	
1421-5	118, 266	767	229-30
1617-20	119, 266	1038-40	226n1
1662-4	119, 266	<i>Equites</i>	
<i>Choephori</i>		334	232, 207
138-41	111-12	545	226n2
<i>Eumenides</i>		<i>Lysistrata</i>	
44	288	473-4	225n1, 273, 289
136	120	507-8	226n1, 263
520-1	110	796	226n2
1000	100, 109	1093	226n2
<i>Persae</i>		<i>Nubes</i>	
829	101n1	537	226n2
<i>Prometheus Vincit</i>		962	227, 265
982	118	963-4	273
<i>Septem contra Thebas</i>		973	273
186	113, 264, 273	979-80	273
568	103	1009-14	273
610	104	1027	228
645	104-5, 288	1060	228
<i>Supplices</i>		1067	89, 152, 229, 258
197-203	114, 264, 273	<i>Pax</i>	
710	115, 264, 273	1297	231
724-5	115, 264, 273,	<i>Phutus</i>	
	290	563-4	230
992	115, 264, 273,	1119	226n2
	290		



<i>Ranae</i>		594	158
727-9	231, 263	595-601	152
853	226n2	596	158
<i>Thesmophoriazusae</i>		601	158
548	226n1, 260	681-2	152
<i>Vespae</i>		740-1	152
748	230	<i>Bacchae</i>	
1404-5	226n2	268-9	179
		311-2	180
Aristoteles		314-18	174-5
<i>Ethica Nicomachea</i>		331-2	180
1103b19	28n38	348-9	177
1128b10-5	53n23	359	180
1145b14-15	71	504-5	177-8, 263
1146a9-12	236n21	640-1	178, 263
1151b34-1152a3	166n21	655-6	181-2
<i>Rhetorica</i>		683-8	175, 289
1390b	266	849-53	180
		939-40	175
Bacchylides		1150-2	176
13.182-9	86-8	1340-3	176
		<i>Cyclops</i>	
Democritus		334-8	150
<i>fr.</i> 294	266	<i>Electra</i>	
		50-3	152, 162-3, 258, 303
Demosthenes			
1.27	247n39	261	152, 258
2.22	247n39	923	159
3.20	247n39	1080	159
3.26	249	1099	159
6.19	247n39	<i>Helena</i>	
6.23	247n39	47	151, 258
7.19	247n39	97	145-6
19.196	239	932	158
19.215-6	239	1684	158
19.285	290	1625-6	149
21.74	289	<i>Heracles</i>	
21.227	290-1	855-7	147-8
25.94	291	<i>Heracidae</i>	
38.26	241	263	151
45.68	274	272	151
45.80	237, 242	476-7	264, 365
		1007:	288
Euripides		1012	151
<i>Alcestis</i>		<i>Hippolytus</i>	
181-2	161	10-22	167-9
614-17	160	73-81	115, 117-8
753	153, 289	358-9	170
<i>Andromache</i>		392-402	169-70
222-31	156-7	399	164
234-5	157	403-7	170-1

413	164	3.71.3	194-5
490-7	171-2	4.77	289
704	149-50,	7.15.1-2	195-7
173n22		7.104.2	197
725-31	163, 169		
948-51	165	Hipponax	
966	173n22	<i>fr.</i> 182 (W)	96
991-1008	164-5		
994-5	163	Homer	
1013-18	148-9	<i>Iias</i>	
1034-5	164, 172	1.188-95	73
<i>Ion</i>		9.340-3	63
520-1	146-7, 253	21.462-9	42-3, 46-8, 50, 53-4, 254, 305
<i>Iphigenia Aulidensis</i>			
379	150	<i>Odyssea</i>	
407	150	4.156-60	42-3, 44-5, 50, 53-4, 265
824	153		
1024	153	17.235-8	71
1157-61	159	17.347	53, 329
1208	150	18.90-4	71-2
<i>Medea</i>		23.11-14	42-3, 48-50, 253
307-15	186-7	23.26-31	8, 9, 42-3, 45-6, 50
548-50	186	24.192-202	64-5
627-44	184-5		
882-8	187	<i>Hymnus ad Bacchum</i>	
911-13	183, 264, 273	49	95
1365-9	183-4		
<i>Orestes</i>		Isaeus	
254	146, 253, 273	1.1	245, 289
502	151	- <i>fr.</i> 13.4	237n22
558	159		
1132	159	Isocrates	
1509	149	1.15	237n22
<i>Phoenissae</i>		1.46	241, 289
177	150	2.31	237n22
549-54	148-9	3.36	258
1112	150, 288	3.37	241
<i>Troades</i>		3.38	237n22
348-50	146, 253, 273	3.43	241
422-3	35, 154, 260	3.44	241
643-68	154-6, 264	4.81	289
645	29	4.197	247n38
1027	158	5.7	247n38
		6.59	289
Heraclitus		7.4	248
<i>fr.</i> 116	332	7.7	289
		7.14	248
Herodotus		7.37	237n22
1.4.2-3	199-200	8.58	247n38
3.35.1-2	198-9, 253	8.63	247n38
3.64.5	9, 198, 252	8.104	247n38

8.119	247n38	160E3-5	4, 265, 324,
9. 22-3	265-6		329, 339
9.31	249	161B6	4, 324,
9.38	249		330-2, 339
9.59	247n38	162A4	289
12.14	247n38	163E4	331
12.115	248	163E10	4, 324
12.138	249	164C6	332
12.140	249	164D4	4, 324, 332, 339
12.151	249	165C5-7	4, 324, 333
15.24	237n22, 289	166C2-3	4, 325, 333
15.111	249	166E7	335
16.28	249	167A1-7	4, 325, 335-6
18.46	248n41	170D1-3:	4, 325
		171D6-E7	336-7
Lysias		<i>Gorgias</i>	
1.10	260	478D6	290, 313n29
1.38	243, 267	491D4-E1	1, 258, 312-3
3.4	235-6, 258,	492A8	313
	259	492B4	313
6.54	245	492C1	313
14.12	237n22	503E6	314
14.41	237n22,	504A7	314
	245, 258	504D3	314
19.16	237n22, 258	507A1	299, 315
19.54	245-6	507A7-C2	315-6
21.18-9	234-5, 258	<i>Laches</i>	
24.17	244	189C7-E2	27, 306-8
26.5	246	<i>Leges</i>	
		908A4	290
Pindar		909A1	290
<i>Paeanes</i>		<i>Phaedo</i>	
1.5-10	90-1	69A4	290
6.144	90	<i>Politicus</i>	
9.52	91	306A12-311C8	321
<i>Pythian Odes</i>		306B9-10	321
3.63	95	307E-308A	321
<i>Isthmian Odes</i>		<i>Protagoras</i>	
8.24-6:	88-9, 258	322C2	301
		323A1-2	300
Plato		329D-E	299
<i>Charmides</i>		332A4-333B6	298
155D3-4:	5, 258, 325	333B8-9:	303
157D3	326	333D3-E1	303
158C5-6	5, 12, 273-4,	349D3-5	304
	326	<i>Respublica (Republic)</i>	
158E7-159A1	326-7, 334	375C6-7	317
159B2-6	4, 265, 273,	389D9-E3:	317, 344
	324, 233,	403A7	289
	326-9, 339	410E5-411A4	318-20
159C-160D	328	430E6-9	342-3

431A3-B3	345	1135-42	82
431E6	344	1323-6	93
432A7-9	344		
433C1	345	Thucydides	
442C10-D1	347	1.32.4	203
443C-444A	347	1.37.2	203
		1.40.2	204
Semonides		1.42.2	204
fr. 7.108-13 (W): 68		1.79.2	210
		1.80.3	289
Sophocles		1.84.1-3	210-4, 256
<i>Ajax</i>		1.86.2	214
127-33	125, 268	1.120.4	209-10
585-6	129-30, 263	3.37.3	206-7
666-77	130-3, 266	3.42.3	207-8
1073-6	127, 266, 289	3.43.5	208
1255-63	128-9, 266	3.44.1	208, 256
1264-5	129	3.58.2	205
<i>Electra</i>		3.59.2	205
307-9	134, 264	3.62.1	214
364-8	135, 255	3.65.3	291
464-5	137	3.68.3	215
<i>Oedipus Tyrannus</i>		3.82	124, 193, 218-21,
584-9	139		305
<i>Philoctetes</i>		3.82.4	219-20
300-4	138, 254	3.82.8	220-1
1257-60	139-40	4.28.5	216
<i>Trachiniae</i>		4.60.1	205
434-5	140	4.61.1	205
<i>Fr.</i>		4.64.4	205
786	266	5.101.1	289
		6.6.2	256-7
Theognis		6.78.2	291
39-52	82-6	6.87.3	291
41	267	8.1.3	290
373-80	81	8.24.3-5	215-6
379	267	8.48.7	218, 291
429-38	78-9, 267	8.53.3	217, 269
453-6	79, 267		
479-87	94, 257, 273	Xenophon	
497-8	94-5, 257	<i>Memorabilia</i>	
665	82, 257	1.1.20	269
701	82, 267	1.2.1	71
753-6	80, 267	1.2.26	266
1081-2b	86, 267		



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